# DEFORMITIES

OF

# DR SAMUEL JOHNSON.

SELECTED FROM HIS WORKS.

*Nihil rerum mortalium tam inſtabile ac fluxum eſt, quam fama—*
TACITUS.

The diverſion of *baiting* an AUTHOR has the ſanction of all ages and nations, and is more lawful than the ſport of teizing other *animals*, becauſe for the moſt part HE comes voluntarily to the ſtake.
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# PREFACE

## TO THE SECOND EDITION.

MAN is endowed with ſagacity ſufficient to diſcover his errors, but ſeldom has fortitude to forſake them. Hence it ariſes that even the weakeſt of the ſpecies can point out the follies of his companions, and fancies that he can reform his own. We are amazed that a being like ourſelves ſhould thus deliberately act below the dignity of reaſon, but we forget that our own conduct may alſo be reviewed with contempt and pity.

The world is buried in prejudice: Every department of knowledge is deeply infected by its fatal poiſon. Thus we frequently reſpect or reprobate a book without a peruſal, merely on account of the Author's name. Not one in ten thouſand of his panegyriſts hath ever comprehended the ſyſtem of Newton.—What then is the value of *their* approbation? The public have long heard that a late Engliſh Dictionary is a moſt maſterly performance; but is there a ſingle man in England who ever read it half through? No. The ſchool-boy imagines that it is above his capacity: The man of letters feels it to be below his; but being conſidered as a faſhionable decoration in a cloſet of books, it is bought without the leaſt chance of being peruſed, and WE (for the *firſt* time to be ſure) have been admiring we know not what.

However as the variety of our ſentiments is without end, it often happens, that while a philoſopher is celebrated by one part of his readers, he is deſpiſed by ſome of the reſt. Almoſt all the great authors of the preſent age have been more bitterly reviled

reviled than any other ſubjects of England, the Miniſtry excepted. But in a matter ſo frivolous as the merit of a book, the public are ſeldom guilty of groſs injuſtice. Indeed, when an acute hiſtorian continues, in contempt of his own conviction, to perſiſt in a falſehood, merely becauſe he hath once affirmed it—when an elegant poet, in ſearch of ſublimity, ſoars, or rather ſinks beyond the kenn of common ſenſe *—when an aſtronomer treats his antagoniſt like a felon—when an advocate of piety impregnates his pages with ſlander, ſcurrility, and treaſon—then the world may be pardoned though they abate ſomething of their veneration for the dignity of the learned.

We can hardly produce a ſtronger evidence of the prejudice, and the good nature of the public, than their indulgence to the foibles of Dr Samuel Johnſon; nor a ſtronger evidence of the force of ſelf-conceit, than that diſdain of admonition which forms the capital feature in his character. He ſeems to fancy that his opinions cannot be diſputed; and many of his admirers acquieſce in his idea; yet his volumes are of no great value; his perſonal appearance cannot much recommend him; his converſation would ſhock the rudeſt ſavage. His ignorance, his miſconduct, and his ſucceſs, are a ſtriking proof that the race is not always to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong. Let us enquire by what ſingular ſeries of accidents, ſuch a man crawled to the ſummit of claſſical reputation?

Moſt of his verſes were among his early productions, and they merit abundant praiſe. His account of Savage compelled our approbation, and diſcovered a ſpecies of excellence but very little known in the annals of Engliſh literature. The force of language and of thought which he diſplayed in the Rambler, extended his reputation, and atoned for his

* Read Mr Maſon's Ode to Truth, and pick out a ſingle ſentiment if you can.

his numerous imperfections. He had by this time engaged to write an Engliſh Dictionary. Wiſe men are known by their work, ſays the Proverb. After many years, he produced a performance of which I ſhall only ſay what can eaſily be proved, that few books are ſo unworthy of the title which they bear, and ſo void of every thing intellectual.

But Dr Johnſon's credit was ſupported by ſomething very different from intrinſic merit. As he was not worth a ſhilling, his work was printed and patronized by a phalanx of bookſellers; and we can have no doubt that much of its ſucceſs was owing to their vigorous but intereſted exertions. He had likewiſe other aſſiſtance, which would have been more than ſufficient to ſupport the reputation of an ordinary writer. He was protected by Mr Garrick, the darling of mankind. England herſelf never produced a more generous friend: And though he ſeldom wrote leſſons of morality, nothing could exceed the clearneſs of his underſtanding, but the benevolence of his heart. By him, it is probable, Dr Johnſon was introduced to the late Earl of Cheſterfield; a Miniſter, a man of letters, and a friend to merit. His Lordſhip was perſuaded to celebrate, by anticipation, the merits of the Doctor's Dictionary *, and his condeſcenſion is ſaid to have been repaid by the moſt ungrateful inſolence. Of theſe two illuſtrious men it may almoſt be affirmed that their influence was univerſal, and when ſupported by the weight of the bookſellers, oppoſition ſunk before it. The Doctor ſoon after received a penſion from the moſt unfortunate of all Stateſmen, a Stateſman whom North Britons ought to mention as ſeldom as poſſible, and his name acquired additional ſplendour from the dignity of Independence.

Since that period his reputation, or at leaſt his popularity

* World, No. 100.

pularity, has been rather on the decline. His edition of Shakeſpeare was with difficulty forced upon the world by every artifice of trade. His political pieces have long ſince inſured the deteſtation of his countrymen, a few individuals excepted. His Tour, conſidered as a whole, is a ridiculous performance. His lives of Engliſh Poets abound with judicious obſervations; but the great misfortune is, that our hiſtorian can very ſeldom conceal the narrowneſs of his ſoul.

Of the preſent trifle the Author has very little to ſay. The reception which it at firſt met with has induced him to riſk a ſecond edition. He has peruſed it with honeſt attention, from the firſt line to the laſt, that he might endeavour to ſupply its deficiencies, and to correct its errors. In the execution of this taſk, he has frequently had occaſion to remark, that it is more eaſy to demoliſh a palace than to erect a cottage.

EDINBURGH,
*Nov.* 21, 1782.

# INTRODUCTION.

WHEN a boy peruſes a book with pleaſure, his admiration riſeth immediately from the work to its author. His fancy fondly ranks his favourite with the wiſe, and the virtuous. He glows with a lover's impatience, to reach the preſence of this *ſuperior being*, to drink of ſcience at the fountain-head, to complete his ideas at once, and riot in all the luxuries of learning.

The novice unhappily preſumes, that men who command the paſſions of others cannot be ſlaves to their own: That a hiſtorian muſt feel the worth of juſtice and tenderneſs, while he tells us, how kings and conquerors are commonly the burden and the curſe of ſociety: That an aſſertor of public freedom will never become the dupe of flattery, and the pimp of oppreſſion: That the founder of a ſyſtem cannot want words to explain it: *That* the compiler of a *dictionary* has at leaſt a common degree of knowledge: *That* an inventor of *new* terms can tell what they mean: *That* he, who refines and fixes the language of empires, is able to converſe, without the pertneſs of a pedant, or the vulgarity of a porter: *That* a preacher of morality will bluſh to perſiſt in vindictive, deliberate, and detected falſehoods: *That* he who totters on the brink of eternity will ſpeak with caution and humanity of the dead: And *that* a traveller, who pretends to veracity, dares not avow contradictions.

But in learning, as in life, much of our happineſs flows from deception. Ignorance, the parent of wonder, is often the parent of eſteem and love. While devouring

devouring Horace we venerate the Deſerter of Brutus, and the Slave of Cæſar. Tranſported by his ſublime eloquence, the reader of Cicero forgets that Cicero himſelf was a plagiariſt and a coward: That Rome was but a den of robbers: That Cataline reſembled the reſt; and that this rebel was only revenging the blood of butchered nations, of Samnium, of Epirus, of Carthage, and of---HANNIBAL.

'The laurels which human praiſe confers are 'withered and blaſted by the unworthineſs of thoſe 'who wear them.' There is often a curious contraſt between an author and his books. The mildeſt, the politeſt, the wiſeſt, and the moſt *worthy* man alive, pens five hundred pages to diſplay the pleaſures of friendſhip and the beauties of benevolence; but alas! he is a theoriſt only, for his ſympathy never coſt him a ſhilling. A party-tool talks of public ſpirit. A pedant commands our tears. A penſioner inveighs againſt penſions; and a bankrupt preaches public œconomy. The philoſopher quotes Horace, while he defrauds his valet. A mimick of Richardſon, is a domeſtic tyrant: A Sydenham, the rendezvous of diſeaſes: A declaimer againſt envy, of all men the moſt invidious. The ſatiriſt has not a reformer's virtues. The poet of love and friendſhip is without a miſtreſs, or a friend; while a time-ſerver celebrates the valour of heroes, and exults in the *freedom* of England. Like Penelope, moſt writers employ part of their time, to undo the labours of the reſt. Judging by their lives one would think it were their chief ſtudy to render learning ridiculous. We loſe all reſpect for teachers, who, when the leſſon is ended, are "no wiſer or better than common men." To be convinced that books are trifles, let us only remark how little good they do, and how little thoſe, who love them, love each other. The monopoliſts of literary fame, for the moſt part, regard a rival as an enemy. Their mutual hoſtilities, like thoſe of aquatick animals, are unavoidable and conſtant; and their

voracity

voracity differs from that of the ſhark, but as a half-devoured carcaſe, from a murdered reputation. The exiſtence of many books depends on the ruin of ſome of the reſt; yet, with our *Engliſh Dictionary*, a few *immortal* compoſitions are to live unwounded by the ſhafts of envy, and to deſcend in a torrent of applauſe from one century to another. A thouſand of their critics will exiſt and be forgotten; a thouſand of their imitators will ſink into contempt; but THEY ſhall defy the force of time; continue to flouriſh thro' every *faſhion* of philoſophy, and, like Egyptian pyramids, periſh but in the ruins of the globe.

# DEFORMITIES, &c.

IN the number of men who diſhonour their own genius, ought to be ranked Dr Samuel Johnſon; for his abilities and learning are not accompanied by candour and generoſity. His life of Pomfret concludes with this maxim, that 'he who pleaſes many, muſt 'have merit;' yet, in defiance of his own rule, the Doctor has, a thouſand times, attempted to prove, that they who pleaſe many, have *no* merit. His invidious and revengeful remark on Cheſterfield, would have diſgraced any other man. He ſaid, and nobody but himſelf would have ſaid it, that Churchill was a ſhallow fellow. And he once told ſome of his admirers, that SWIFT was a *ſhallow*, a *very ſhallow* fellow: reminding us of the Lilliputian who drew *his* bow to Gulliver *. For the memory of this man, who may

 be

* Swift had the ſplendid misfortune to be a man of genius. By a very ſingular felicity, he excelled both in verſe and proſe. He boaſted, that no *new* word was to be found in his volumes; though, in glory above all writers of his time, he did not fancy *that* entitled him to ingreſs or inſult converſation. He was no leſs remarkably clean, than *ſome* are remarkably dirty. His love of fame never led him into the loweſt of all vices; and a ſenſe of his own dignity made him reſpect the importance and the feelings of others. He often went many miles on foot, that he might be able to beſtow on the poor, what a coach would have coſt him. He raiſed ſome hundreds of families from beggary, by lending them five pounds a-piece only. He inſpired his footmen with Celtic attachment. Whatever was his pride, he ſhewed none of it in 'the venerable preſence of miſery.' Though a poet he was free from vanity; though an author and a divine, his example did not fall behind his precepts; though a courtier, he diſdained to fawn on his ſuperiors; though a patriot, he never, like our ſucceſſive generations

be claſſed with Cato and Phocion, the Doctor feels no tenderneſs or reſpect. And for that *, and other critical blaſphemies, he has undergone innumerable floggings. No writer of this nation has made more noiſe: None has diſcovered more contempt for other men's reputations, or more confidence in his own. I would humbly ſubmit a few hints for his improvement, if he be not 'too old to learn.' And, whatever freedoms I take, the Doctor himſelf may be quoted as a precedent for inſolent invective, and brutal reproach. He has told us †, that 'the two loweſt of 'all human beings are, a ſcribbler for a party, and a 'commiſſioner of exciſe.' This very man was himſelf the hired ſcribbler of a party; and why ſhould a commiſſioner of exciſe be one of the meaneſt of mankind? In the preface to his octavo Dictionary, the Doctor affirms, that, 'by the labours of all his predeceſſors, 'not even the *loweſt* expectation can be gratified.' The author of a reviſal of Shakeſpeare ‡ attacks (he ſays) with '*gloomy malignity*, as if he were dragging 'to juſtice an aſſaſſin or incendiary. He bites like a 'viper, and would be glad to leave inflammations 'and gangrene behind him.' For this ſhocking language, which could have been anſwered by nothing but a blow, the *primum mobile*, perhaps, was, that the critic had dedicated his book to Lord Kaims, (a Scotſman, and another very *ſhallow* fellow) 'as the trueſt 'judge, and moſt intelligent admirer of Shakeſpeare.'

His

generations of blaſted orators, ſacrificed his principles to his paſſions. 'His meaneſt talent was his wit.' His learning had no pedantry, his piety no ſuperſtition; his benevolence almoſt no parallel. His intrepid eloquence firſt pointed out to his oppreſſed countrymen, that path to Independence, to happineſs, and to glory, which their poſterity, at this moment, ſo nobly purſue. His treatiſe on the conduct of their foreign allies, firſt taught the Engliſh nation the dangers of a continental war, diſpelled their deluſive dreams of conqueſt, and ſtopt them in the full career to ruin.

* See parallel between Diogenes and Dr Johnſon in Town and Country Magazine. In his life of Swift, the Doctor tells us, that 'he relieved without pity, and aſſiſted without kindneſs.'

† Idler, No. 70. ‡ Preface to Shakeſpeare.

His treatment of Colley Cibber is, if poſſible, worſe. That great ornament of the ſtage was a man of genius, at leaſt equal to Dr Johnſon—but they had a quarrel, and though Cibber has been more than twenty years buried, the Doctor, in his life of Pope, ſtudies to revenge it. His expreſſions are groſs. 'In 'the Dunciad, among other *worthleſs* ſcribblers he '(Pope) had mentioned *Cibber*. The diſhonour of 'being ſhewn as *Cibber's* antagoniſt could never be 'compenſated by the victory. *Cibber* had nothing to 'loſe—The ſhafts of ſatire were directed in vain a-'gainſt *Cibber*, being repelled by the impenetrable 'impudence,' &c.* We have been deafened about the Doctor's private virtues; of which theſe paſſages are a very poor evidence.

It is believed by ſome, that Dr Johnſon's *admirable* Dictionary is the moſt capital monument of human genius; that the ſtudies of Archimedes and Newton are but like a feather in the ſcale with this amazing work; that he has given our language a ſtability, which, without him, it had never known; that he has performed alone, what, in other nations, whole academies fail to perform; and that as the fruit of *his* learning and ſagacity, our compoſitions will be claſſical and immortal. This may be true; but the book diſplays many proofs of his *ill-nature*, and evinces what I want to inſiſt on, viz. that *he who deſpiſes politeneſs cannot deſerve it*. For his ſeditious and impudent definitions † he would, in Queen Anne's reign, have had

* Life of Pope.

† The following extracts from the Doctor's Dictionary are a key to his political tenets: EXCISE, a hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged, not by the common judges of property, but *wretches* hired by thoſe to whom exciſe is paid. *Gazetteer*, was lately a term of the utmoſt infamy, being uſually applied to wretches that were *hired* to vindicate the court. *Penſion*, an allowance made to any one without an equivalent. In England it is generally underſtood to mean pay given to a ſtate hireling for treaſon to his country. *Penſioner*, a ſlave of ſtate, hired by a ſtipend to obey his maſter. KING, monarch, ſupreme governour. *Monarch*, a governour inveſted with *abſolute* authority, a *King*. *Whig*, 1. whey, 2. the

had a fair chance of mounting the pillory. Hume, Smith, and Cheſterfield may be quoted to prove, that Walpole and Exciſe were improper objects of execration; but an *emanation* of royal munificence has, of late, relaxed the Doctor's *frigorific* virtue; and, in his *Falſe Alarm*, he affirms, that our government approaches nearer to perfection, *than any other that fiction has feigned, or hiſtory recorded.* This is going pretty far; but the peeviſh, though *incorruptible* patriot, proceeds a great deal farther. His political pieces have great elegance and wit; yet, if the tenth part of what he advances in them be true, his countrymen are a mob of ignorant, ungrateful, rebellious ruffians. Every member in Oppoſition is a fool, a firebrand, a monſter; worſe, if that were poſſible, than Ravillac, Hambden, or Milton *. Here is a ſhort ſpecimen:

'On the original contrivers of miſchief let an in-
'ſulted nation pour out its vengeance. With what-
'ever deſign they have inflamed this pernicious con-
'teſt, they are themſelves equally deteſtable. If they
'wiſh ſucceſs to the colonies, they are TRAITORS to
'this country; if they wiſh their defeat, they are
'TRAITORS at once to America and England. To
'them

2. the name of a *faction*. *Tory*, one who adheres to the *antient* conſtitution of the ſtate, and the apoſtolical hierarchy of the church of England, oppoſed to a *whig*. *Johnſon's ſol. Dic.* The word *faction* is always uſed in a *bad* ſenſe; though, in defining it, the Doctor did not, and, after what he had ſaid of a whig, perhaps durſt not ſay, that a faction is always a term for the ſuppoſed diſturbers of public peace. 'The moſt obſequious of the ſlaves of pride, the 'moſt rapturous of the gazers upon wealth, the moſt officious of the 'whiſperers of greatneſs, are collected from ſeminaries appropria-'ted to the ſtudy of wiſdom and of virtue;' *Rambler*, No. 180. That is to ſay, men of learning are a ſet of the moſt ſneaking, pitiful, time-ſerving raſcals. The reader will make his own applications.

* See *Political tracts by the author of the Rambler.* His character of Hambden, the reader will find in the 1ſt page of Waller's life. Of Milton, he ſays, that 'his impudence had been at leaſt e-'qual to his other powers. Such was his malignity, that hell grew 'darker at his frown. He thought women born only for obedi-'ence, and men only for rebellion.' There is much more in the ſame tone; and, with what juſtice his epithets are applied, let Engliſhmen judge.

' them (Meſſ. Burke & Co.) and them only, muſt be
' imputed the interruption of commerce, and the mi-
' ſeries of war, the ſorrow of thoſe who ſhall be ruin-
' ed, and the blood of thoſe that ſhall fall *.'

From the Doctor's volumes I am to ſelect ſome paſſages, illuſtrate them with a few obſervations, and ſubmit them to the reader's opinion. Theſe pages aim at *perſpicacity*. They are ambitious to record TRUTH.

' He that writes the life of another, is either his
' friend or his enemy, and wiſhes either to exalt his
' praiſe, or aggravate his infamy †.' The Doctor betrays a degree of inconſiſtency incompatible with his reputed abilities. After ſuch a confeſſion, what have we to hope for in *his* lives of Engliſh poets?

Having thus denied veracity both to Plutarch and *himſelf*, this Idler, in the very next page, leaps at once from the wildeſt ſcepticiſm to the wildeſt credulity. The paragraph is too long for inſertion; but the tenor of it is, that ' a man's account of himſelf,
' left behind him unpubliſhed, may be *depended on*;'
becauſe, ' by ſelf-love all have been ſo often betray-
' ed, *that* (now for the ſtrangeſt flight of nonſenſe) all
' are on the watch againſt its artifices.'

In his Dictionary, *temperance* is defined to be ' *mo-*
' *deration oppoſed to gluttony and drunkenneſs.*' And he has ſince defined ' ſobriety or temperance' to be ' *no-*
' *thing* but the forbearance of *pleaſure* ‡.' This maxim needs no comment.

' A man will, in the hour of darkneſs and fatigue,
' be content to leave behind him every thing but
' *himſelf* §.' Here the Doctor ſuppoſes, that a perſon can leave *himſelf* behind *himſelf*. When the reader examines the paſſage in the original, he will be convinced, that this cannot be an error of the preſs only. Had the Rambler, when he croſſed Tweed, left behind him his pride, his indolence, and his vulgarity,

* Taxation no tyranny.
† Idler, No. 85.
‡ Ibid, No. 89.
§ Tour, p. 59.

rity, he would have returned a much wiſer, better, and happier man than he did.

*Form*, he explains to be, 'the external appearance 'of any thing, ſhape;' but, when ſpeaking of hills in the North of Scotland, he ſays, 'the appearance 'is that of matter incapable of FORM *!' He has ſeen *matter*, not only deſtitute, but incapable of *ſhape*. He has ſeen an *appearance* which is incapable of *external* appearance. And yet, in the ſame book, he ſeems to regret the weakneſs of his viſion.

Beauty is 'that aſſemblage of graces which plea-'ſes the eye.' But, in the Idler †, he diſplays his true idea of beauty; and it is a very lame piece of philoſophy. Judge from a few ſamples: 'If a man, 'born blind, was to recover his ſight, and the moſt 'beautiful woman was to be brought before him, he 'could not determine whether ſhe was handſome or 'not. Nor if the moſt handſome and moſt deform-'ed were produced, could he any better determine 'to which he ſhould give the preference, having ſeen 'only theſe two.' And again, 'as we are then more 'accuſtomed to beauty than deformity, we may con-'clude *that* to be the reaſon why we approve and 'admire it.' Moreover, 'though habit and cuſtom 'cannot be ſaid to be the cauſe ‡ of beauty, IT is cer-'tainly the cauſe of our liking it §. I have no doubt, 'but that, if we were more uſed to deformity than 'beauty, deformity would then loſe the idea now an-'nexed to it, and take that of beauty; as if the whole 'world ſhould agree that *yes* and *no* ſhould change 'their meanings, *yes* would then deny, and *no* would 'affirm.' This is ſuch a perfection of nonſenſe, that the reader will, perhaps, think it a forgery; but he will find it *verbatim et literatim*, and the whole number is in the ſame ſtile.

'Swift

* Tour, p. 84. † Idler, No. 82.

‡ He ſhould have ſaid *cauſes*, for he mentions *two*.—What is the Doctor's diſtinction here between habit and cuſtom?

§ *Quere*, Are we more accuſtomed to beauty than deformity? or is not the fact otherwiſe.—Did habit ever make a ſick man fond of diſeaſe, or a poor man fond of poverty?

'Swift in his *petty* treatiſe on the Engliſh language, allows that new words *muſt* ſometimes be introduced, but propoſes that *none* ſhould be ſuffered to become obſolete *.' The Doctor has not given a fair quotation from Swift. One would imagine that Swift had propoſed to retain every word which is to be found in any of our popular authors, but he neither ſaid nor meant any ſuch thing. His words are theſe: They (the members of the propoſed ſociety) 'will find many words *that deſerve to be utterly thrown out of our language!*' And the Dean ſays nothing afterwards which infers a contradiction †.

In his account of Lyttleton, the Doctor's good nature is evident. He ſpeaks not a word as to the merit of the hiſtory of Henry II. but—'It was publiſhed with ſuch anxiety as only *vanity* can dictate.' We are next entertained with a page of dirty anecdotes concerning its publication, which the Doctor ſeems to have picked up from ſome printer's journeyman. 'The Perſian Letters have ſomething of that indiſtinct and headſtrong ardour for liberty which a man of genius *always* catches when he enters the world, and *always* ſuffers to cool as he paſſes forward.' Of the admired monody to the memory of Lady Lyttleton, we are told only that it is *long*. 'His dialogues of the dead were very eagerly read, tho' the production rather, as it ſeems of leiſure than of ſtudy, rather effuſions than compoſitions. The names of his perſons too often enable the reader to anticipate their converſation; and when they have met, they too often part without a concluſion.' Theſe remarks apply with peculiar juſtice to Dr Johnſon's dictionary, for that work is an *effuſion* rather than a

*compoſition*

* Vide Preface to folio Dict.

† Dr Campbell of Aberdeen, on the uſe of new words, ſays, 'That nothing can be juſter than Johnſon's manner of arguing on this ſubject, in regard to what Swift a little chimerically propoſeth, that though new words be introduced, none ſhould be ſuffered to become obſolete.' This Gentleman ought to have conſulted Swift himſelf. Let him peruſe the 'petty treatiſe,' and then let him bluſh for having truſted an author void of fidelity.

*compoſition.* His reader is for the moſt part able to anticipate his definitions, and they generally end without concluſion. Lord Lyttleton's poems 'have *no-* 'thing to be *deſpiſed*, and *little* to be *admired*.' But here, as uſual, the Doctor contradicts himſelf, and in the very next line 'of his Progreſs of Love, *it is ſuf-* 'ficient blame to ſay' that it is paſtoral. His blank 'verſe in Blenheim has neither much force, nor much 'elegance. His little performances, whether ſongs, 'or epigrams, are ſometimes ſpritely, and ſometimes 'inſipid'---and of courſe *deſpicable*. The candid and accurate author of the Rambler has forgot the exiſtence of that beautiful bloſſom of ſenſibility, that pure effuſion of friendſhip, the prologue to Coriolanus.

The life of Dr Young has been written by a lawyer, who conveys the meaneſt thoughts in the meaneſt language. His ſtile is dry, ſtiff, grovelling, and impure. His anecdotes and ideas, are evidently the cud of Dr Johnſon's converſation. He continues in the ſame fretful tone from the firſt line to the laſt. He is at once moſt contemptuous and contemptible. Whatever he ſays is inſipid or diſguſting. He is the bad imitator of a bad original; and an honeſt man cannot peruſe his libel without indignation. He ſteps out of his way to remind us of Milton's *corporal correction*, a ſtory fabricated, as is well known, by his Employer. His ignorance has already been illuſtrated in a periodical pamphlet. Johnſon himſelf, with all his imperfections, is often as far ſuperior to this unhappy penman, as the author of the Night-Thoughts is ſuperior to Johnſon. And yet this critical aſſaſſin, this literary jackall, is celebrated by the Doctor *. *Pares cum paribus facile congregantur.*

'Dryden's

* As the venerable and admirable father of *the* Engliſh Dictionary has treated the names of ſuch men as Young and Lyttleton with ſo little ceremony, the reader will perhaps forgive the inſertion of his own character, as drawn by Cheſterfield. 'I am almoſt in a fever, 'whenever I am in his company. His figure (without being deform-'ed) ſeems made to diſgrace or ridicule the common ſtructure of the 'human

'Dryden's poem on the death of Mrs Killigrew is 'undoubtedly the nobleſt ode that our language ever 'has produced. The firſt part flows with a torrent 'of enthuſiaſm. All the ſtanzas, indeed, are not e-'qual.' He proceeds to compare it with an imperial crown, &c. But, a little after, 'the ode on St Ce-'cilia's day is allowed *to ſtand without a rival* *.' Theſe are his identical words; and his admirers may reconcile them if they can. Indeed, he ſeems aſhamed of his own inconſiſtency, and is ready to relapſe; but thinks, upon the whole, that Alexander's Feaſt 'may, *perhaps*, be pronounced ſuperior to the ode 'on Killigrew.' Dr Johnſon is ſaid to be the greateſt critic of his age; yet the verſes on Mrs Killigrew are beneath all criticiſm; and, perhaps, no perſon ever read them through, except their author, and himſelf.

Dryden's fable 'of the Cock and Fox ſeems hard-'ly worth the labour of *rejuveneſcence* †.' Some *nar-*

C *cotic*

'human body. His legs and arms are never in the poſition, which, 'according to the ſituation of his body, they ought to be in; but 'conſtantly employed in committing acts of hoſtility upon the gra-'ces. He throws any where but down his throat, whatever he 'means to drink; and only mangles what he means to carve. *In-'attentive to all the regards of ſocial life*, he miſtimes, or miſplaces 'every thing. He diſputes with heat, and indiſcriminately, mind-'leſs of the rank, character, and ſituation, of thoſe with whom he 'diſputes; abſolutely ignorant of the ſeveral gradations of familiarity 'or reſpect, he is exactly the ſame to his ſuperiors, his equals, and 'his inferiors; and therefore by a neceſſary conſequence abſurd to two 'of the three. Is it poſſible to love ſuch a man? No. The utmoſt 'I can do for him, is to conſider him as a reſpectable Hottentot.' Churchill's account of our hero comes nearly to the ſame. And I preſume that the inimitable Dr Smollet, has exhibited a third picture of this illuſtrious original in Humphry Clinker, Vol. I.—Dr Johnſon's letter to the Earl of Cheſterfield concludes in theſe words: 'What-'ever be the event of my endeavours, I ſhall *not eaſily* regret an at-'tempt which has procured me the honour of appearing thus public-'ly, my Lord, your Lordſhip's moſt obedient, and moſt humble ſer-'vant, Sam. Johnſon.' Theſe extracts afford a ſtriking contraſt between the ſeverity of the polite peer, and the humble politeneſs (for *once*) of the rugged pedant.

* Lives of Engliſh poets, vol. iii. p. 243. and 284. 12*mo* edit.

† Vide Life of Dryden.

*cotic* ſeems to have *refrigerated* the red liquor which circulates in the Doctor's veins*, and to have *hebetated* and *obtunded* his powers of *excogitation* †, for elegance and wit never met more happily than here. Peruſe only the firſt page of this poem, and then judge. The nonſenſe which has been written by critics is, in quantity and abſurdity, beyond all conception. Perhaps his admirers may anſwer, that my remark is but the *ramification* of envy, the *intumeſcence* of ill-nature, the *exacerbation* of 'gloomy malignity.' However, it would not be amiſs to commit that page of *inanity* to the power of *cremation;* and let not his fondeſt idolaters confide in its *indiſcerptibility*. In painting the ſentiments and the ſcenes of common life, to write Engliſh which Engliſhmen cannot read, is a degree of inſolence hardly known till now, and ſeems to be nothing but the poor refuge of pedantic dullneſs.

His Abyſſinian tale hath many beauties, yet the characters are inſipid, the narrative ridiculous, the moral inviſible, and the reader diſappointed. 'Intercepting *interruptions* and *volant* animals' are above common comprehenſion. The Newtonian ſyſtem had reached the happy valley; for its inhabitants talk of the earth's *attraction* and the body's *gravity* ‡. To tell a tale is not the Doctor's moſt happy talent; he can hardly be proud of his ſucceſs in *that* ſpecies of fiction.

Speaking of Scotland, he ſays, 'The variety of ſun 'and ſhade is here § utterly unknown. There is no 'tree for either ſhelter or timber. The oak and the 'thorn *is* equally a ſtranger. They have neither 'wood for paliſades, nor thorns for hedges. A 'tree may be ſhown in Scotland as a horſe in Ve'nice ‖.' An *Engliſh* reader may, perhaps, require to be told, that there are thouſands of trees of all ages and

* Vid. Dict. article Blood.

† *Excogitation*, this combination of letters is to be found in the Doctor's works, though not in his Dictionary.

‡ Raſſelas, chap. vi.

§ He meant to ſay *there*.

‖ Tour, p. 16. and 18. &c.

and dimenſions, within a mile of Edinburgh; that there are numerous and thriving plantations in Fife; and that, as ſome of them overſhadow part of the poſt-road to St Andrew's, the Doctor muſt have been blinder than darkneſs, if he did not ſee them. But why would any man travel at all, who is determined to believe nothing which he *hears*, and who, at the ſame time, cannot *ſee* ſix inches beyond his noſe?

'We are not very ſure that the bull is ever *without* 'horns, though we have been told that ſuch bulls 'there are *.' Who are the *we* he refers to? and who but the Doctor ever ſtarted ſo weak a queſtion? His ignorance is below ridicule. It is true, that, in England, bulls which *want* horns are leſs numerous than huſbands who *have* them; yet ſuch bulls are always to be found. For the performance which contains this profound remark, this *agglomerated ramification of torpid imbecility*, be it known, that *we* have paid ſix ſhillings, which verifies the proverb, that *a fool and his money are ſoon parted.*

'We found a ſmall church, clean to a degree un-'known in any other part of Scotland†!' Here the fact *may* be true; but Dr Johnſon *muſt* be ignorant whether it is or not. It is certain, that ſome buildings of that kind in Edinburgh, are no high ſpecimens of national taſte; but, if the Rambler would inſinuate that this want of elegance is general, we muſt impeach his veracity; we muſt remind him, that there are gloomy, dirty, and unwholeſome cathedrals in *both* countries; and we muſt lament, that, when entering Scotland, the Doctor *left every thing behind him but* HIMSELF.

'Suſpicion has been always conſidered, when it 'exceeds the common meaſure, as a token of depra-'vity and corruption; and a Greek writer has laid 'it down as a ſtanding maxim, that *he who believes 'not the oath of another, knows himſelf to be perjured.*--- 'Suſpicion is, indeed, a temper ſo uneaſy and reſt-'leſs, that it is very juſtly appointed the concomi-

'tant

* Tour, p. 186. † Ibid, p. 21.

'tant of guilt. Suſpicion is not leſs an enemy to 'virtue than to happineſs. He that is already cor-'rupt, is naturally ſuſpicious, and he that becomes 'ſuſpicious, will quickly be corrupt *.' This cannot always be true; but, if it were, the Rambler is by far the greateſt miſcreant who ever infeſted ſociety. Speaking of Scotland, he ſays, 'I know not whether 'I found man or woman whom I interrogated con-'cerning payments of money, that could ſurmount 'the illiberal deſire of *deceiving me*, by repreſenting 'every thing as dearer than it is.—The Scot muſt be 'a ſturdy moraliſt who does not love Scotland bet-'ter than truth †.' Apply the Doctor's maxims to his own conduct, and then judge of his honeſty. He adds a little after: 'The civility and reſpect which we 'found at every place, it is *ungrateful* to omit, and 'tedious to repeat ‡.' He ſhould not have ſpoke of ingratitude. The picture grows quite ſhocking.

'How they lived without kail, it is not eaſy to 'gueſs. They cultivate hardly any other plant for 'common tables; and, when they had not kail, *they* '*probably had* NOTHING §.' As the word *kail* is not to be found in his Dictionary, an Engliſh reader will be at a loſs to find out what he means. His conjecture is ridiculous; and here a *new* contradiction muſt be ſwallowed by the Doctor's believers; for, if OATS be 'a grain, which, in England, is generally given 'to horſes, but, in Scotland, *ſupports* the people ||,' in that caſe, it is eaſy to gueſs how they lived without *kail*. Any thing elſe had ſurely been better than to fill up his heavy folios with ſuch peeviſh nonſenſe.

In his life of Butler, the Doctor has confined his remarks to *Hudibras*, though the reſt of that author's works, both in proſe and verſe, merit equal attention. What are we to think of this invidious and culpable omiſſion? Hudibras itſelf would, perhaps, have been omitted, if the book had not tended to ridicule

* Rambler, No. 79.
† Tour, p. 369 &c.
‡ Tour, p. 373.
§ Ibid, p. 55
|| Vid. folio Dictionary.

dicule diſſenters; for no man in England ſeems to hate that ſect ſo heartily. In Watt's life, he takes care to tell us, that the author was to be praiſed in every thing but his *non-conformity*; and, in his ever memorable Tour, the Rambler ſays, 'I found ſeveral '(Highland Miniſters), with whom I could not converſe, 'without wiſhing, as my reſpect increaſed, that they 'had not been preſbyterians *.' Here a critic has very properly interrogated the Doctor, what he would have ſaid or thought, if the Highland miniſters had lamented that *he* was *not* a preſbyterian? This man has no tincture of the liberal and humane manners of the preſent age; and yet, with his peculiar conſiſtency, he laughs at the diſſenter who refuſed to eat a Chriſtmas pye †. This quondam believer in the Cocklane ghoſt ſays, 'though I have, like the reſt 'of mankind, many failings and weakneſſes, I have 'not yet, by either friends or enemies, been charged 'with *ſuperſtition* ‡;' yet, with all the Doctor's 'contempt of old women and their tales §,' he would, if a Roman conſul, have diſbanded his army for the ſcratching of a rat ‖.

'We found tea here, as in every other place, but 'our ſpoons were of horn ¶.' This important fact had been hinted in a former page; and ſuch is the Doctor's politeneſs!

> Some rugged rock's hard entrails gave thee form,
> And raging ſeas produc'd thee in a ſtorm. POPE.

'They do what I found it not very eaſy to endure. 'They *pollute* the tea-table by plates piled with large 'ſlices of Cheſhire cheeſe **.' The happineſs of this remark will be fully felt by thoſe acquainted with the peculiar purity of Pompoſo's perſon.

'M'Leod left them *lying* dead by families as they '*ſtood* ††.' This is *profound*; for no man can ſtand and lie at the ſame time. The line ought to be read thus:

* Tour, p. 242. † Butler's life. ‡ Rambler, No. 59.
§ Ibid. ‖ Vid. Plutarch. ¶ Tour, p. 283.
* Tour, p. 124. †† Ibid, p. 154.

thus: 'M'Leod left them lying *dead* by families as 'they HAD *ſtood*.'

Of the Memoirs of Scriblerus, the Doctor ſays: 'If 'the whole may be eſtimated by this ſpecimen, which 'ſeems to be the production of Arbuthnot, with a 'few touches, perhaps, by Pope, the want of more 'will not be much lamented; for the follies which 'the writer ridicules, are ſo little practiſed, that they 'are not known; nor can the ſatire be underſtood 'but by the learned: He raiſes phantoms of abſur-'dity, and then drives them away: He cures diſeaſes 'that were never felt.

'For this reaſon *, the joint production of three 'great writers has never obtained *any* notice from 'mankind. It has been little read, or when read, 'has been forgotten, as no man could be wiſer, bet-'ter, or merrier by remembering it.

"The deſign cannot boaſt of much originality; 'for, beſides its general reſemblance to *Don Quixote*, 'there will be found in it particular imitations of 'the hiſtory of Mr Ouffle.

'Swift carried ſo much of it into Ireland as ſup-'plied him with hints for his travels; and with thoſe 'the world might have been contented, though the 'reſt had been ſuppreſſed †.'

Here we have a copious ſpecimen of the Doctor's *taſte*; and all the volumes of Engliſh criticiſm cannot produce a poorer page.

The work thus condemned, diſplays a very rich vein of wit and learning. The follies which it expoſes, though a little heightened, were, in that age, frequent, and perfectly well known. The writers whom it ridicules, have ſunk into *nihility*. The book is always reprinted with the proſe works of Pope, and Swift, and Arbuthnot; and what ſtronger mark of *notice* can the public beſtow? Every man who reads it

* The Doctor ought to have ſaid, 'For *theſe reaſons*,' as he mentions ſeveral.

† Pope's life.

t, muſt be the wiſer and the merrier; and the ſatire may be underſtood with very little learning.

Dr Arbuthnot was a Scotſman, and, probably, a Preſbyterian. He was an amiable man. He is *dead*. Dr Johnſon feels himſelf to be his inferior; and, therefore, endeavours to murder the reputation of his works. To gain credit with the reader, he artfully draws a very high character of Arbuthnot, a few pages before, and here, in effect, overturns it. He had ſaid that Arbuthnot was 'a ſcholar, with great 'brilliancy of wit.' But, if his wit and learning are not diſplayed in the Memoirs of Scriblerus, we may aſk where wit and learning are to be found?

Of this extract, the ſtyle is as ſlovenly as the leading ſentiments are falſe.

The book is ſaid to be, the 'production of Arbuthnot.' Within ten lines, it is 'the joint production 'of *three* great writers.' How can follies be practiſed which are not known? or diſeaſes cured, which were never felt? He claims the attributes of omniſcience when ſaying, that 'it has been little read, or 'when read, has been forgotten;' for, as it has been ſo frequently reprinted, no human being can be certain that it has been little read, or forgotten; but there is the ſtrongeſt evidence of the contrary. This period concludes, as it began, with a moſt abſurd aſſertion. If 'the deſign cannot boaſt of much origi-'nality,' there is nothing original in the literary world. Who is Mr Ouſſle? and who told the Doctor that Swift carried any part of Scriblerus into Ireland, to ſupply hints for his travels? When Gulliver was publiſhed, Dr Arbuthnot, as appears from their correſpondence, did not know whether that book was written by Swift or not; ſo that we are ſure the Dean carried *nothing* of Arbuthnot's along with him. Had Dr Johnſon 'flouriſhed and ſtunk' in their age, he would have been the hero of Martin's memoirs; and, to ſuppoſe him conſcious of this circumſtance, will account for the Rambler's malevolence, and explain why the bull broke into a china-ſhop.

I beg

I beg particular attention to the following paſſage.

'His (Pope's) verſion may be ſaid to have tuned 'the Engliſh tongue; for, ſince its appearance, no 'writer *, however deficient in other powers, has 'wanted *melody* †.' This is wild enough; but, of Gray's two longeſt Odes, 'the language is laboured 'into *harſhneſs*.' Hammond's verſes 'never glide in 'a ſtream of *melody*.' The diction of Collins 'was 'often *harſh*, unſkilfully laboured, and injudiciouſly 'ſelected. His lines, commonly, are of ſlow motion, 'clogged and impeded with cluſters of conſonants.' Of the ſtyle of Savage, 'The general fault is, *harſh*-'*neſs*.' The diction of Shenſtone 'is often *harſh*, 'improper, and affected,' &c.

Of theſe five poets, ſome were not born when Pope's verſion was publiſhed; and, of the reſt, not one had penned a line now extant. They are all here charged, in the ſtrongeſt terms, with *harſhneſs*; and yet, (*mirabile dictu!*) ſince the appearance of Pope's verſion, 'no writer, however deficient in other powers, has 'wanted *melody*.'

It is no leſs curious, that the author of this wonder-working tranſlation is himſelf charged with want of melody; and that too in a poem written many years after the appearance of Pope's Homer. 'The eſſay 'on man contains more lines unſucceſsfully laboured, 'more *harſhneſs* of diction, more thoughts imperfect-'ly expreſſed, more levity without elegance, and 'more heavineſs without ſtrength, ‡' &c.

'Gray thought his language more poetical, as it 'was more remote from common uſe §.' This aſſertion is not entirely without foundation, but it is very far from being quite true.

'Finding in Dryden, honey *redolent of ſpring*, an 'expreſſion that reaches the utmoſt limits of our lan-'guage, Gray drove it a little more beyond common apprehenſion,

* He ſhould have ſaid, *no poet*; for that was his meaning, if he had any. No *writer*, includes proſe as well as verſe; and this ſample may give us a fair idea of the Doctor's *accuracy* in point of ſtyle.

† Life of Pope. ‡ Ibid. § Gray's life.

apprehenſion, by making *gale* to be *redolent of joy* ‘ *and youth* *.’ The cenſure is juſt. But Dr Johnſon is the laſt man alive, who ſhould blame an author for driving our language to its utmoſt limits: For a very great part of his life has been ſpent in corrupting and confounding it. In ſome verſes to a Lady, he talks of his *arthritic* pains†, an epithet not very ſuitable to the dialect of Parnaſſus. Dr Johnſon himſelf cannot always write common ſenſe. ‘ In a ſhort time ma‘ ny were content to be ſhewn beauties which *they* ‘ *could not ſee* ‡.’ He muſt here mean—‘ Beauties ‘ which they could not have ſeen;—for it is needleſs to add, that no man can be ſhewn what he cannot ſee.

It is curious to obſerve a man draw his own picture, without intending it. Pompoſo, when cenſuring ſome of Gray's odes, obſerves, That ‘ Gray is too fond ‘ of words arbitrarily compounded. The mind of ‘ the writer ſeems to work with unnatural violence. ‘ *Double, double, toil and trouble.*’ He (the author of an Elegy in a country church-yard) ‘ has a kind of ‘ ſtrutting dignity, and is tall by walking on tip-toe. ‘ His art and his ſtruggle are too viſible, and there is ‘ too little appearance of eaſe, or nature. In all ‘ Gray's odes, there is a kind of cumbrous ſplendour ‘ which we wiſh away §.’ We may ſay like Nathan, *Thou art the man.*

Mr Gray, and Mr Horace Walpole, are ſaid to have *wandered* through France and Italy ‖. And as a contraſt to this polite expreſſion, I ſhall add ſome remarks which have occurred on the Doctor's own mode of wandering.

‘ It muſt afford peculiar entertainment to ſee a per‘ ſon of his character, who has ſcarcely ever been ‘ without the precincts of this metropolis (London), ‘ and *who has been long accuſtomed to the adulation of a* ‘ *little knot of companions of his own trade*, ſallying forth



* Gray's life. † Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. XVII.
‡ Gray's life. § Ibid. ‖ Ibid.

'in queſt of diſcoveries—Neither the people nor the 'country that he has viſited will perhaps be conſider-'ed as the moſt extraordinary part of the phænome-'na he has deſcribed.—The Doctor has endeavoured 'to give an account of his travels; but he has fur-'niſhed his readers with a picture of himſelf. He 'has ſeen very little, and obſerved ſtill leſs. His 'narration is neither ſupported by vivacity, to 'make it entertaining, nor accompanied with infor-'mation, to render it inſtructive. It exhibits the 'pompous artificial diction of the Rambler with the 'ſame *vacuity of thought*.—The reader is led from one 'Highland family to another merely to be informed 'of the number of their children, the barrenneſs of 'their country, and of the kindneſs with which the 'Doctor was treated. In the Highlands he is like a 'fooliſh peaſant brought for the firſt time into a great 'city, ſtaring at every ſign-poſt, and gaping with e-'qual wonder and aſtoniſhment at every object he 'meets *.'

'At Florence they (Gray and Walpole) quarelled 'and parted; and Mr Walpole is *now* content to 'have it told that it was by his fault †.' This is a dirty inſinuation; and the rant which follows in the next period is of equal value.

He obſerves, That '*A long ſtory* perhaps adds little 'to Gray's reputation ‡' *Perhaps* was uſeleſs here, and indeed the Doctor has introduced it in a thouſand places, where it was uſeleſs, and left it out in as many where it was neceſſary. In juſtice to Gray, he ought to have added, that their Author rejected, from a correct edition of his works, this inſipid ſeries of verſes.

'Gray's reputation was now ſo high that he had 'the honour of refuſing the laurel §.' No man's reputation has ever yet acquired him the laurel, without ſome particular application from a courtier. What honour

* Edinburgh Review, Vol. III. P. 55. et ſeq.
† Gray's life. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid.

honour is acquired by refuſing the laurel? An hundred pounds a-year would have enabled an œconomiſt like Mr Gray to preſerve his independence and exert his generoſity. The office of laureat is only ridiculous in the hands of a fool. Mr Savage in that character produced nothing which would diſhonour an Engliſhman and a poet. It is probable that Mr Gray, a very coſtive writer, could hardly have made a decent number of verſes within the limited time. From the paſſage now quoted the reader will not fail to remark, that the Rambler 'nurſes in his mind a fool-'iſh diſeſteem of kings *.'

Mr Gray 'had a notion not very peculiar, that he 'could not write but at certain times, or at happy 'moments; a fantaſtic foppery to which *my* kindne's 'for a man of learning and of virtue wiſhes him to 'have been ſuperior †.' Milton, who was no doubt a ſhallow fellow compared with the Reformer of our language, had the ſame 'fantaſtic foppery.' Mr Hume remarks that Milton had not leiſure 'to watch 'the returns of genius.'—Every man feels himſelf at ſome times leſs capable of intellectual effort, than at others. The Rambler himſelf has, in the moſt expreſs terms, contradicted his preſent notion. In Denham's life he quotes four lines which muſt, he ſays, have been written 'in ſome *hour propitious to poetry*.' In another place in the ſame lives his tumid and prolix eloquence diſembogues itſelf to prove, what no man ever doubted, viz. 'That a tradeſman's hand is often 'out, he cannot tell why.' And an inference is drawn, That this is ſtill more apt to be the caſe with a man ſtraining his mental abilities.

In Gray's ode on ſpring, 'The thoughts have no-'thing new, the morality is natural, but too ſtale ‡.' Read the poem, and then eſteem the critic if you can. Speaking of *the Bard* he ſays, 'Of the firſt 'ſtanza the abrupt beginning has been celebrated; 'but *technical* beauties can give praiſe only to the inventor

* Life of Pope. † Gray's life. ‡ Ibid.

'ventor *.' The queſtion here is, What he means by a *technical* beauty? That word he explains, 'Be-'longing to arts; not in common or popular uſe'---How can this word in either of theſe ſenſes apply here with propriety?

What he ſays of 'theſe four ſtanzas †'---conveys, I think, no ſentiment. Every word may be underſtood ſeparately, but in their preſent arrangement they ſeem to have no meaning, or they mean nonſenſe, and perhaps, contradiction; but this paſſage I leave to the ſupreme tribunal of all authors---to the reaſon and common ſenſe of the reader. He can beſt determine whether he has 'never ſeen the notions in any other 'place, yet perſuades himſelf that he always felt 'them.' Theſe ideas are very beautifully expreſſed in many paſſages of Gaelic poetry: and Mr Gray, let it be remembered, to the honour of his taſte and candour, was the warm admirer of Fingal.

Comparing Gray's ode with an ode of Horace ‡, he ſays, 'there is in *the Bard* more force, more thought, 'and more variety'---as indeed there very well may, for in the one there are thirty-ſix lines only, and in the other one hundred and forty-four. His whole works are full of ſuch trifling obſervations. 'But to 'copy is leſs than to invent, theft is always dange-'rous.' If he means to inſinuate that Gray's Bard is a copy of Horace, (and this is the plain inference from his words) I charge him in direct terms as *an atrocious violator of* TRUTH.

'The fiction of Horace was to the Romans credi-'ble; (NO) but its revival diſguſts *us* with apparent 'and unconquerable falſehood, *Incredulus odi* §.' How will

* Gray's life. † Ibid.

‡ Paſtor cum traheret per freta navibus, &c.

§ Gray's life. Dr Beattie of Aberdeen differs very widely from Dr Johnſon on the merit of this poem. He ſays, 'I have heard the 'fineſt Ode in the world (meaning Gray's Bard) blamed for the 'boldneſs of its figures, and for what the critic was pleaſed to call 'obſcurity.' Beattie's Eſſays on poetry and muſick, 3d edit. p. 269. This is certainly very ſtrong; yet he ſeems in ſome danger of contradicting

will the Doctor's verdict be digeſted at Aberdeen by 'a poet, a philoſopher, and a good man *.' It is diverting to remark how theſe *mutual admirers* claſh on the cleareſt point, with not a poſſibility of reconcilement.

I paſs by five or ſix lines, which are not worth contradiction, though they cannot reſiſt it. 'I do 'not *ſee* that *the Bard* promotes any truth moral or 'political †.' The Rambler's intellect is *blind*.—He ſeems to have ſtared a great deal, to have ſeen little or nothing. The Bard very forcibly impreſſes this moral, political, and important truth, that eternal vengeance would purſue the Engliſh Tyrant and his poſterity, as enemies to poſterity, and exterminators of mankind. Dr Johnſon, a ſtickler for the *jus divinum*, did not reliſh this idea.

He commends the 'Ode on Adverſity,' but the hint was at 'firſt taken from Horace ‡.' The poem referred to has almoſt no reſemblance to Mr Gray's. And if we go on at this rate, where will we find any thing original? He miſtakes the title of this poem, which is not an 'Ode on,' but a 'Hymn to' Adverſity. This is a clear though trifling proof of his inattention. As he dare not condemn this piece, it is diſmiſſed in ſix lines, to make room for '*The wonder-*'*ful wonder of wonders*, the two Siſter Odes, by which 'many have been perſuaded to think themſelves de-'lighted §.' He chews them through four tedious octavo pages. We come then to Gray's Elegy, which occupies an equal ſhare of a paragraph containing only fourteen lines. So much more plentiful is the critic

dicting himſelf, when he ſays in another place, That 'for energy of 'words, vivacity of deſcription, and *appoſite* variety of numbers, 'Dryden's Feaſt of Alexander is ſuperior to any ode of Horace or 'Pindar now extant.' Ibid, p. 17. One would have been apt to ſuppoſe that the Lyrick Poem which eclipſed Horace, if not the fineſt, is at leaſt one of 'the fineſt in the world.'—But an author has novelty to recommend him, when he affirms that Gray is ſuperior to Dryden, and Dryden to all Antiquity.

* Gray's life. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

§ Gray's life.

tic in gall than honey! And in reading this fragment we may remark that *nonſenſe* is not *panegyric*.

Speaking of Welſh Mythology, he ſays, 'Attention recoils from the repetition of a tale that, even 'when it was *firſt* heard, was heard with ſcorn *.' There is no reaſon to think that the Welſh diſbelieved theſe fictions. It is much more likely that many believe them at this day. Shakeſpeare has from this ſuperſtition made a whimſical picture of Owen Glendower: He painted nature. This is one of thoſe aſſertions which our dictator ſhould have qualified with a *perhaps*, an adverb, which, wherever it *ought* to be met with in the Doctor's pages, 'will not eaſily be 'found †.'

'But I will no longer look for particular faults; 'yet let it be obſerved that the ode might have been 'concluded with an action of better example; but 'ſuicide is always to be had without expence of 'thought ‡.'

The lines objected to are theſe:

'He ſpoke, and headlong from the mountains height,
'Deep in the roaring tide, he plung'd to endleſs night.'

Let the Doctor, if he can, give us a better concluſion.

'*The Proſpect of Eaton College* ſuggeſts nothing to 'Gray, which every beholder does not equally think 'and feel §.' He might as well have ſaid, that every man in England is capable of producing Paradiſe Loſt.

We have ſeen with what tenderneſs Dr Johnſon ſpeaks of the dead, we ſhall now ſee his tenderneſs to the living. 'Let us give the Indians arms, and 'teach them diſcipline, and encourage them now and 'then to plunder a plantation. Security and leiſure 'are the parents of ſedition ||.' The Doctor ſeems here to be ſerious. The propoſal muſt reflect infinite honour on his wiſdom and humanity.

'No

* Gray's life.
† A favourite phraſe of the Rambler's.
‡ Gray's life.
§ Ibid.
|| Taxation no Tyranny.

'No part of the world has yet had reaſon to re-
'joice that COLUMBUS found at laſt reception and em-
'ployment *.' This wild opinion is fairly diſproved by Dr Smith, a philoſopher not much afraid of novelty; for he has advanced a greater variety of original, intereſting, and profound ideas, than almoſt any other author ſince the firſt exiſtence of books.

'Such is the unevenneſs of Dryden's compoſitions
'that ten lines are ſeldom found together without
'ſomething of which the reader is aſhamed †.' This is a very wide *aberration* from truth. In Dryden's fables we may frequently meet with five hundred lines together, without *ten* among them, which could have diſgraced the moſt eminent writer. His prologues and epilogues are a never failing fountain of good ſenſe and genuine poetry. But it were inſulting the taſte of the Engliſh nation to inſiſt any farther on this point. We ſhall preſently ſee how far Dr Johnſon's Dictionary will anſwer the foregoing deſcription.

Dryden it is ſaid diſcovers 'in the preface to his
'fables, that he tranſlated the firſt book of the Iliad
'without knowing what was in the ſecond ‡.' This inſinuation revolts againſt all probability; and whoever peruſes that elegant and delightful preface will find it to be NOT TRUE.

'The higheſt pleaſure which nature has indulged
'to ſenſitive perception is that of reſt after fatigue §.' And *ſenſitive* is defined '*having ſenſe or perception; but*
'*not reaſon.*' If I underſtand the meaning of this paſſage, it is, that no pleaſure communicated through any of the organs of ſenſe is equal to that of *reſt*. This aſſertion leads to the moſt abſurd conſequences. In man, to ſeparate ſenſitive from rational perception appears to be ſimply impoſſible. Even reſt is not in ſtrict language any pleaſure. It is merely a mitigation of pain. The reader will decide whether I do the Doctor

* Taxation no Tyranny. † Dryden's life. ‡ Ibid.
§ Rambler, No. 150.

Doctor juſtice, while I ſay, that he muſt have been petrified when he compoſed this maxim. Thirſt and hunger had been long forgot. Handel and Titian had no power to charm. We learn that a lover can receive, and his miſtreſs can beſtow nothing which is equal to the rapturous enjoyment of an *eaſy chair*. The thought is new; no human being ever did, or ever will conceive it, except this immortal IDLER.

'Phyſicians and lawyers are no friends to religion, 'and many *conjectures* have been formed to diſcover 'the *reaſon* of ſuch *a combination* between men who 'agree in *nothing elſe*, and who ſeem to be leſs affect-'ed in their own provinces by religious opinions than 'any other part of the community*.' He then proceeds in the tone of an author, who has made a diſcovery to inform us of the cauſe. 'They have all ſeen 'a parſon, ſeen him in a habit different from their 'own, and therefore *declared war* againſt him.' But *this* can be no motive for peculiar antipathy to parſons, allowing ſuch antipathy to exiſt; for in habit all other claſſes differ no leſs from the clergy, than the lawyer and phyſician. But the remark itſelf is frivolous and falſe. Boerhaave and Hale were men of eminent piety. Phyſicians and lawyers have as much regard for religion as any other people generally have. Their *agreeing in nothing elſe* is another of the blunders crowded into this paſſage. But I have too much reſpect for the reader's underſtanding to inſiſt any farther on this point. The *conjecturers*, the *combination*, and the *declaration of war*, exiſt no where but in the Doctor's pericranium. He was at a loſs what to ſay, and the poſition is only to be regarded as a *turbid ebullition of amphibological inanity*. But while we thus meet with ſomething which is ridiculous in every page, we are not to forget even for a moment, what we have often heard, and what is moſt unqueſtionably *true*, viz. That Dr Johnſon is the father of Britiſh

* Rambler, No. 9.

tiſh literature, capital author of his age, and the greateſt man in Europe *!!!

'We are by our occupations, education, and habits of life, divided almoſt into different ſpecies, 'who regard one another for the moſt part with ſcorn 'and malignity †.' The Doctor is himſelf a proof, that a man may look upon almoſt all of his own profeſſion with ſcorn and malignity: So that between his precept and his practice, the world ſeems bad enough. But I hope every heart revolts at this groſs inſult on the characters of mankind. He brings as an inſtance the averſion which ſubſiſts between ſoldiers and ſailors. There no doubt have been jealouſies and bloodſhed between theſe two claſſes of men, but the ſame accidents fall out more frequently between ſoldiers themſelves. The *ſcorn* and *malignity* of admirals ſeldom affect any line of ſervice but their own. His captain of foot ‡, who ſaw no danger in a ſea-fight was a fool, and juſt ſuch a ſpeimen of Engliſh officers, as the Doctor himſelf is of Engliſh travellers. Our repulſe at Carthagena was not owing to an antipathy between the *common* men. Our late victory at Savannah proves with what ardour they can unite. The Doctor has inſulted almoſt every order of ſociety.

Coblers with coblers ſmoke away the night,
Even players in the common cauſe, unite.
AUTHORS alone with more than mortal rage,
Eternal war with brother authors wage §.

'To raiſe eſteem we muſt benefit others,' is an aſſertion advanced in the ſame page. But the Doctor, if he knows any thing, muſt know that *eſteem* is often felt for an enemy. We value for his courage or ingenuity the man who never heard our name, or who would not give a guinea to ſave us from perdition. We can eſteem the hero who butchers nations, and the pedant who perplexes truth. Marlborough's avarice led him to continue the continental war, till

 he

* Vide the life of Garrick by Mr Davies.
† Rambler, No. 160. ‡ Ibid. § Churchill's Apology.

'he had laid the great foundation of our public debt. He was deteſted as much as any general *now* in England, and yet 'he was ſo great a man (ſaid one of 'his enemies) that I have forgot his faults.' Poſterity, while they ſuffer for his baſeneſs, pay the due tribute of eſteem to his genius and intrepidity.

In every point of view this maxim is 'the baſeleſs 'fabrick of a viſion.' And what had ſo far *obumbrated* the Rambler's powers of *ratiocination*, it is not eaſy to gueſs. We ſometimes feel it impoſſible to eſteem even our benefactor. 'I have received obligations '(ſaid Chatterton) without being obliged.' And of conſequence, his benefactors had forfeited his eſteem. The father of Britiſh literature has in forty other places contradicted his own words. He has proved that eſteem is involuntary, and that benefits do not always procure it.'

The Doctor ſays, 'That Cowley having, when very young, read Spenſer, became *irrecoverably* a poet *. And he adds a remark that ſhows his good ſenſe: 'Such 'are the accidents which, ſometimes remembered, 'and ſometimes perhaps forgotten, PRODUCE that 'particular deſignation of mind and propenſity for 'ſome certain ſcience or employment, which is commonly called genius. The true genius is a mind of 'large general powers, *accidentally* determined to ſome 'particular direction. The great painter of the preſent age had the firſt fondneſs for his art excited by 'a peruſal of Richardſon's treatiſe.' This drawling definition

* Vide Life of Cowley. His impreſſions had been very ſlight, for Cowley has nothing of the melody, or magnificence of the Fairy Queen. Of its great author we know little but that he was praiſed, and neglected, unfortunate, and poor; and, from his epitaph, that he died young. His ſubject is not happy, his words are often obſolete, and his ſtanza can hardly pleaſe us long. But we may preſume that he wanted leiſure to ſtudy the great models of antiquity: That he wanted that tranquillity of mind ſo requiſite to the ſucceſs of a poet: And that his defects are owing to the bad taſte of his age, and the hardſhips of his life. Had he lived longer, and had he enjoyed that competence which a prudent ſhoeblack ſeldom fails to enjoy, Spenſer would have been ſecond in fame to Shakeſpeare only.

definition contradicts common ſenſe. Does the Doctor mean that Cowley would have become a painter by peruſing Richardſon? or that Reynolds would have become a poet by peruſing Spenſer? This is the clear inference from his words, and its abſurdity is 'too 'evident for detection, and too groſs for aggrava-'tion *.' At this rate Garrick might have eclipſed Newton, and Voltaire defeated Frederick. Plato poſſeſſed 'a mind of large general powers.' He read Homer. He wrote verſes, and he found that he could not be a poet. The Doctor himſelf has 'large gene-'ral powers;' but he could never have been made a decent dancing maſter. Marcel might have broke his heart, before his pupil had acquired three ſteps of a minuet. In his dictionary the Doctor, without a word of *accidental* determination, defines genius to be 'diſ-'poſition of *nature*, by which any one is qualified for 'ſome peculiar employment.' And here I cannot help adding, that 'the great painter' has by ſtepping out of his own line, diſcovered the narrowneſs of even a great man's knowledge. He affirms †, That *ſcarce a poet from Homer down to Dryden ever felt his fire diminiſhed merely by his advance in years.* There is nothing more abſurd, ſays Cicero, than what we hear aſſerted by ſome of the philoſophers. Even in painting, the Preſident's own profeſſion, that rule does not hold. Cellini tells us, that Michael Angelo's genius decayed with years; and he ſpeaks of it as common to all artiſts. His notion was perhaps grafted on

* Dr Johnſon on Cymbeline. The ſame ſentiment is ſtarted in his account of Pope, 'To the particular ſpecies of excellence men 'are directed, not by an aſcendant planet, or predominant humour, 'but by the firſt book which they read, ſome early converſation 'which they heard, or ſome accident which excited ardour and e-'mulation.'—The Doctor is in this paſſage cenſuring Pope's ignorance of human nature—while his own marvellous and extreme ſtupidity makes him almoſt beneath cenſure. The reader will not realize Monteſquieu's remark, That *when we attempt to prove things ſo evident we are ſure never to convince.*

† Annual Regiſter 1779, Part II. p. 148. I abridge his words, but give their full meaning.

on an opinion of the Doctor's about the durability of Waller's genius *. But Waller was a feeble poet; he never had a genius, so that we need not wonder he never lost it. All his verses are hardly worth one of Dr Johnson's imitations of Juvenal.

Rowe (the famous tragic poet) 'seldom moves either pity or terror †.' Paradise Lost is a work which 'the reader admires, and lays down, *and forgets to take up again* ‡,' But Rowe's Lucan, which is very little read, the Doctor pronounces to be 'one of the *greatest* productions of English poetry.' Dr Johnson's sycophants have asserted, that 'in the walks of criticism and biography he has long been without a rival.' And they are no doubt willing to support their idol in his infamous assertion, that Swift 'excites neither surprise nor admiration §.' The Doctor's disregard for the unanimous sentiments of mankind often excites surprize, but never admiration. Let us here apply his own observation, that 'there is often found in commentaries a spontaneous train of invective and contempt, more eager and venemous than is vented by the most furious controvertist in politics, against whom he is hired to defame ‖.' We may illustrate the Rambler's remark by his own example: 'Theobald, a man of narrow comprehension, and small acquisitions, with no native and intrinsick splendour of genius, with little of the artificial light of learning—his contemptible ostentation I have frequently concealed ¶.' The definer of a fiddlestick proceeds thus: 'I have in some places shewn him, as he would have shewn himself for the reader's diversion, that the *inflated* emptiness of some notes may justify or excuse the contraction of the rest.'—The advocate for tenderness and decorum goes on to tell us, that 'Theobald, thus weak and ignorant, thus *mean* and FAITHLESS, thus petulant and ostentatious, by the good luck of having Pope for his enemy,

* Life of Waller.
† Life of Rowe.
‡ Life of Milton.
§ Life of Swift.
‖ Preface to Shakespeare.
¶ Ibid.

'enemy, has eſcaped, and eſcaped *alone* with repu-
'tation from this undertaking. So eaſily is he prai-
'ſed whom no man can envy *.' How does it appear that Theobald was weak and ignorant? The Doctor himſelf had in the preceding page told us, that 'he (Theobald) collated the antient copies, and 'rectified *many* errors.' This aſſertion our author, with his wonted conſiſtency, has flatly contradicted in the very next line. 'What *little* he (Theobald) 'did was commonly right.' Has the Doctor adduced, or has he attempted to adduce evidence, that Theobald was *mean* and *faithleſs*, or what provocation had he to load this man's memory with ſuch injurious epithets? His burſt of vulgarity can reflect diſgrace on nobody but himſelf. It is evident, tho' he thinks proper to deny it, that he conſidered Theobald as an object of envy; yet he is obliged to confeſs that Theobald 'eſcaped, and eſcaped *alone*, with 'reputation,' from the taſk of amending Shakeſpeare. In aſſigning a reaſon for this applauſe of Theobald, Dr Johnſon pays a very poor compliment to the penetration of the public, for ſurely to combat a writer of ſo much merit and popularity as Pope, was not the plaineſt road to eminence in the literary world.

'In his (Shakeſpeare's) tragic ſcenes there is *always* '*ſomething wanting*'---NO †---'In his comic ſcenes he 'is ſeldom very ſucceſsful, when he engages his cha-'racters in *reciprocations* of ſmartneſs, and conteſts of 'ſarcaſms; their ideas are *commonly groſs*, and their 'pleaſantry *licentious*.' This accuſation is cruel and unjuſt, as all the world knows already. But a great part of that preface is an incoherent jumble of reproach and panegyrick ‡. If any thing can be yet more faulty than what we have juſt now ſeen, it is what follows: 'Whenever he (Shakeſpeare) ſolicits his

* Preface to Shakeſpeare.

† 'He has ſcenes of *undoubted* and *perpetual* excellence.' Ibid. Is there not ſome inconſiſtency in theſe various aſſertions.

‡ See in the ſame ſtyle his obſervations on Prior, Akenſide, and others.

'his invention, or ſtrains his faculties *, the offspring 'of his *throes* is *tumour* (i. e. *puffy* grandeur †), *mean-* 'neſs, *tedioufneſs*, and *obſcurity*. His declamations or 'ſet ſpeeches are *commonly cold and weak*.' The *ſet ſpeeches* (as the Doctor elegantly terms them) of Petruchio, of Jacques, of Wolſey, and of Hamlet, are *perhaps* neither cold nor weak. The concluſion of this period is worthy of ſuch a beginning; he mentions certain attempts from which Shakeſpeare 'ſel- 'dom eſcapes without the pity or reſentment of his reader.' The Doctor himſelf is an object of pity. Shakeſpeare has been in his grave near two centuries ---His life was innocent---His writings are immortal. To feel reſentment againſt ſo great a man becauſe his works are not every where equal, is an idea highly becoming the generoſity of Dr Johnſon.

What 'truth, moral or political,' is promoted by telling us, that, when Thomſon came to London, *his firſt want was a pair of ſhoes*; that Pope 'wore a kind 'of fur doublet, under a ſhirt of very coarſe warm 'linen, with fine ſleeves ‡; and a long ſtring of ſuch tireſome and diſguſting trifles, which make his narrative ſeem ridiculous. Had Dr Johnſon been Pope's apothecary, we would certainly have heard of the frequency of his pulſe, the colour of his water, and the quantity of his ſtools.

'Though Pope ſeemed angry when a dram was 'offered him, he did not forbear to drink it §.' And who the Devil cares whether he did or not? The Doctor needed hardly to have told us, that 'his pet- 'ty peculiarities were communicated by a female do- 'meſtic;' for no gentleman would have confeſſed that they came within the reach of his obſervation.

The *truly illuſtrious* author of the RAMBLER, has exerted

* *Quere.* Did ever Shakeſpeare, or any other man, compoſe a ſingle page, or even a ſingle line, on any ſubject, without either ſtraining his faculties, or at leaſt ſoliciting his invention. It is very poſſible that the Doctor did not ſuſpect the full extent of his expreſſion.

† Vide Dictionary. ‡ Life of Pope. § Ibid.

exerted his venemous eloquence, *through ſeveral pages*, in order to convince us, that 'never were penury of 'knowledge and *vulgarity* of ſentiment ſo happily diſ-'guiſed,' as in Pope's Eſſay on Man. For this purpoſe, the Doctor celebrates the character of Crouſaz, whoſe intentions 'were *always* right, his opinions 'were ſolid, and his religion pure *.' In oppoſition to ſuch authorities, let us hear the great and immortal citizen of Geneva.

'M. de Crouſaz has lately given us a refutation of 'the ethic epiſtles of Mr Pope, which I have read; 'but it did not pleaſe me. I will not take upon me 'to ſay, which of theſe two authors is in the right; 'but I am perſuaded, that the book of the former 'will never excite the reader to do any one virtuous 'action, whereas *our zeal for every thing great and good 'is awakened by that of* POPE †.'

The Eſſay on Man, he ſays, 'affords an egregious 'inſtance of the predominance of genius, the dazzling 'ſplendour of imagery, and the ſeductive powers of 'eloquence. The reader feels his mind full, though 'he learns NOTHING; and when he meets it in its 'new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother, 'and his nurſe ‡.' If the converſations of Dr Johnſon's mother and his nurſe were equal to Mr Pope's verſes, it is a pity the Doctor had not preſerved them. He could hardly have ſpent his time ſo well. And it is a wonder that with ſo many rare opportunities of improvement, the Doctor has never yet eclipſed his nurſe. Voltaire pronounces Pope's Eſſay to be the fineſt didactick poem in the world, and he would no doubt have replied to the Doctor's objections in that tone of contempt with which the Doctor replied to ſome of his—'Theſe are the petty cavils of petty minds §.'

In the Eſſay on Man 'ſo little was any evil tenden-'cy diſcovered, that, as innocence is unſuſpicious, 'many

* Pope's life. † Eloiſa, Letter 83. ‡ Pope's life.
§ Preface to Shakeſpeare.

'many read it for a manual of piety *;'---and will continue to read it, when the cavils of Dr Johnſon are forgotten or deſpiſed.

'He (Pope) nurſed in his mind a fooliſh diſeſteem 'of Kings.' And again, 'He gratified that ambitious petulance with which he affected to inſult the 'great †.'

Dr Johnſon himſelf is by no means remarkable for his reſpect to the great. In the preface to his folio Dictionary, he tells us, that it was written 'without 'any patronage of the *great*,' which is a miſtake; for he had publiſhed a pamphlet, ſome years before, wherein he acknowledges, that Cheſterfield had patronized him; and why the Doctor ſhould retract his own words, it is hard to ſay; for Cheſterfield continued his friend to the laſt; and ſuch a man was very likely *the ſtrongeſt ſpoke in the Doctor's wheel.* But his Lordſhip is now dead, and the Doctor is always and eminently *grateful.*

'It has been maintained by ſome, *who love to talk of* 'what they do not know, that paſtoral is the *moſt antient* 'poetry.' But in the next period, 'paſtoral poetry 'was the *firſt* employment of the human imagination *.' The Doctor, therefore, by his own account, is one of thoſe, *who love to talk of* (and what is yet worſe, to aſſert) *what they do not know.* In North America, the natives have no conception of paſtoral life among themſelves, and their poetry, ſuch as it is, hath no relation to that ſtate of ſociety.

Paſtoral poetry 'is generally pleaſing, becauſe it 'entertains the mind with repreſentations of ſcenes, 'familiar to *almoſt every* imagination, and of which 'all can equally judge whether they are well deſcribed, or not §.'

This period is ſo cloſely interwoven with nonſenſe, that it will take ſome pains to diſentangle it. Rural ſcenes are not familiar to *almoſt every* imagination. In England half the people are ſhut up in large towns, and

* Pope's life. † Ibid. ‡ Rambler, No. 36. § Ibid.

and ſuch is the groſs ignorance of ſome of them, that an old woman in London once aſked, *whether potatoes grew on trees*. Neither is every man an equal judge even of what is familiar to him. Obſerve how the Rambler confounds the diſtinction between *all*, and *almoſt every*. The whole number is in the ſame ſtile

'At this time a long courſe of oppoſition to Sir 'Robert Walpole had filled the nation with clamours 'for liberty, of which no man felt the want, and 'with care for liberty which was not in danger *.'

No man was more violent than Dr Johnſon in abuſing Walpole. We have already ſeen ſome of thoſe political definitions, which at this hour deform the Doctor's Dictionary. His late zeal for government could ariſe from ſelf intereſt only. And to take his own words, he comes under ſuſpicion *as a wretch hired to vindicate the late meaſures of the Court* †. He accuſes Milton as a tool of authority, as a forger hired to aſſaſſinate the memory of Charles I. Theſe charges came with a very bad grace from the Rambler. They are long ſince refuted in a ſeparate publication, and yet they will be reprinted in every future edition of his book.

Will any man be the wiſer, the better, or the merrier, by reading what follows—'Lyttleton was his '(Shenſtone's) neighbour, and his rival, whoſe em-'pire, ſpacious and opulent, looked with diſdain on 'the *petty ſtate* that appeared behind it. For a while 'the inhabitants of Hagley affected to tell their ac-'quaintance of the *little fellow* that was trying to make 'himſelf admired; but when by degrees the Lea-'ſowes forced themſelves into notice, they took care 'to defeat the curioſity which they could not ſup-'preſs, by conducting their viſitants perverſely to 'inconvenient points of view, and introducing them

 'at

* Thomſon's life.

† The author has no intention here to diſſeminate political opinions—His only meaning is to prove, that *ſomebody* has neither principle, nor conſiſtency, nor ſhame.

'at the wrong end of a walk to detect a deception; 'injuries of which Shenſtone would heavily com-'plain *.' The paragraph cloſes with a *deep* obſervation.

As the Doctor's own aſſociates † have lamented the exiſtence of this beautiful and important paſſage, I have only to ſay, that *Poor* Lyttleton (as the Doctor calls him) patronized Fielding, and that the Rambler patronizes William Shaw: That his Lordſhip was an elegant writer: That he did not adopt Johnſon's new words: That *Lexiphanes* was dedicated to him: That he was a great and an amiable man: And that he is *dead*.

With all his affectation of hard words, the Doctor becomes at once intelligible when he wiſhes to reprobate a rival genius, or inſult the aſhes of a benefactor. In defiance of Addiſon, and a thouſand other *ſhallow fellows*, he aſſerts that Milton 'both in proſe and 'verſe had formed his ſtile by a *perverſe* and *pedantick* 'principle ‡.'

Speaking of Mr Walmſley, he ſays, 'At this 'man's table I enjoyed many chearful and agreeable 'hours, with companions ſuch as are not often to be 'found.—I am not able to name a man of equal 'knowledge. He never received *my* notions with 'contempt.—He was one of the firſt friends whom li-'terature procured me,—and I hope that at leaſt my '*gratitude* made me worthy of his notice. It may be 'doubted whether a day now paſſes, in which I have 'not ſome advantage from his friendſhip §.' But then, 'He was a WHIG with ALL the virulence and male-'volence of *his* party.' This is a moſt beautiful concluſion; and quite in the Doctor's ſtile. His accuſation is incredible. A monſter, ſuch as he draws here, can ſeldom deform exiſtence.

We are told that at St Andrews Cardinal Beaton

* Life of Shenſtone. † Gentleman's Magazine.
‡ Vide life of Milton. § Life of Smith.

ton ‘ was murdered by the ruffians of Reformation *.’ And it ſeems to be the faſhion of the day, to cenſure that action. Yet it is allowed on all hands that Wiſhart's doctrine, in ſpite of its *incomprehenſibilities*, was better than Popery—that Beaton, a profligate uſurping Prieſt, had committed every human vice—that, without civil authority, he dragged our Apoſtle to the ſtake—and that his avowed deſign was to expell or exterminate the whole Proteſtant party. Had the Cardinal been permitted to complete his plan, we durſt not at this day have diſputed, ‘ Whether it is ‘ better to worſhip a piece of rotten wood †, or ‘ throw it in the fire?’ It is therefore evident that to kill this tyrant was highly proper and laudable. We may juſt as well cenſure the centurion who ſlew Caligula. When a philoſopher, who truly deſerves that title, was once in converſation reprobating Melvil, he was interrupted by this ſimple queſtion, Whether if his own antagoniſt had conducted *him* to the ſtake, he would not have pardoned a pupil for avenging his blood? ‘I would moſt certainly,’ he replied, and ſuch muſt be the real ſentiments of all men, whatever they may chuſe to print. When we attempt to hide the feelings of nature, that we may ſupport a favourite ſyſtem, we never fail to become ridiculous. In this age and nation, if a magiſtrate ſhall riſe above the law; if he rob us of life with the moſt barbarous exulation; if his guilt equal whatever hiſtory hath recorded; if he want nothing but the purple and the legions to rival Domitian, the voice of nature will be heard. The brave will reject ſuch unmanly, ſuch fatal refinements of ſpeculation. Like Hambden and Melvil, they will ſtand forth in defence of themſelves, and their poſterity. They will relieve their fellow citizens from temporal perdition. They will drive inſolence and injuſtice from the ſeat of power. They will exult in danger, and ruſh to revenge or death. They will plunge their ſwords in the

* Tour, p. 8. 12mo edit. † The Crucifix—Gulliver's Travels.

the heart of their oppreſſor; or they will teach him, like Charles, to atone upon the ſcaffold for the tears and the blood of his people; and while in the eyes of their countrymen, they read their glory *, they will perhaps reflect with a ſmile, that ſome ſlaviſh pedant, ſome penſioned traitor to the rights of mankind, is one day to mark them out as objects of public deteſtation †.

'The theatre, when it is under any other direction, is peopled by ſuch characters as were never ſeen, converſing in a language which was never heard, upon topics which will never ariſe in the commerce of mankind.—Upon every other ſtage the univerſal agent is love, by whoſe power all good and evil is diſtributed, and every action quickened or retarded. To bring a lover, a lady and a rival into the fable; to entangle them in contradictory obligations, perplex them with oppoſitions of intereſt, and harraſs them with violence of deſires inconſiſtent with each other; to make them meet in rapture, and part in agony; to fill their mouths with hyperbolical joy, and outrageous ſorrow; to diſtreſs them as nothing human ever was diſtreſſed; to deliver them as nothing human ever was delivered, is the buſineſs of a modern dramatiſt. For this

* 'And read their hiſt'ry in a nation's eyes.' GRAY'S ELEGY.

† On this ſubject nothing liberal could be expected from Dr Johnſon, who, in ſpite of his murmurs about Exciſe, and his actual benevolence in private life, has always been the firm advocate of oppreſſion. His project of hiring the Cherokees to maſſacre the North Americans (vide ſupra p. 32) may ſerve to inform us what he himſelf would have done, had he been ſeated in the ſaddle of authority. But what ſhall be ſaid for ſome Scottiſh hiſtorians who have adopted the ſame ideas? One of them tells us, that Beaton had prepared a liſt of three hundred and ſixty of the leaders of the Proteſtant party, whoſe lives and fortunes were to be ſacrificed to the rapacity and the pride of this ambitious prelate. Yet he pronounces the killing of ſuch a dangerous monſter to be a moſt execrable deed. He dwells with ſtudied exultation on the execution of Charles I. but if our King really deſerved his fate, Was not Beaton by many degrees more criminal? An author can hardly ſpend his time worſe, than in writing to flatter the prejudices, and to corrupt the common ſenſe of the world.

this probability is violated, life is misrepresented, and language is depraved *.' The weakest of Dr Johnson's admirers will blush in reading this passage. He very fairly denies every degree of merit, to every dramatic writer, of every age or nation, Shakespeare alone excepted. What can be more ridiculous than this?

'Every man finds his mind more strongly seized by the tragedies of Shakespeare than of any other writer; others please us by particular speeches, but he always makes us anxious for the event, by exciting restless and *unquenchable* † curiosity, and compelling him that reads his work to read it through ‡.' But the Doctor overthrows all this within a few pages, for Shakespeare has '*perhaps* not *one* play, which if it were now exhibited as the work of a cotemporary writer, *would be heard to the conclusion* §.' The Rambler cannot always suppress his thorough contempt for the taste of the public. He no doubt laughs internally at their folly in admiring him.

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I proceed to the Doctor's English Dictionary, and shall begin with quoting the remarks already made by a judicious friend, on this subject.

'Among the many foibles of the human race, we 'may justly reckon this to be one, that when they 'have once got any thing really useful, they apply it 'in all cases, proper or improper, till at last they 'make it quite ridiculous. Nothing can possibly be 'more useful than a just and accurate *definition*, be'cause by this only we are able to distinguish one 'thing from another. It is obvious, however, that '*in definitions we ought always to define a thing less* '*known, by one which is more so, and those things which* '*are known to every body, neither can be defined, nor*

'*ought*

* Preface to Shakespeare.

† *Quere.* What is *unquenchable* curiosity? and how can a play excite curiosity which cannot be satisfied by its conclusion?

‡ Preface to Shakespeare. § Ibid.

'*ought we to attempt a definition of them at all; becauſe*
'*we muſt either explain them by themſelves, or by ſome-*
'*thing leſs known than themſelves, both of which give*
'*our definitions the moſt ridiculous air imaginable.*

'A certain right reverend gentleman, not many
'miles from Edinburgh, and whom, out of my great
'regard for the cloth, I put in the firſt place, gave
'the following definition of a thief. "A thief," ſays
'he, "my friends, is a man of a *thieviſh diſpoſition.*"
'Now though this definition is ſomewhat imperfect,
'for a thief alſo exerts that *thieviſh diſpoſition* which
'lurks in his breaſt, I intend to take it for my model,
'on account of its great conformity to many of the
'definitions given by the moſt celebrated authors.---I
'remember to have ſeen in one of the Reviews a de-
'finition of *Nature*, which began in the following
'manner. "Nature is that *innate* celeſtial fire."---
'The reſt has in truth eſcaped my memory, though
'I remember the Reviewers indecently compared it
'to the following lines, which they ſay were a de-
'ſcription of a dog-fiſh.

'And his evacuations
'Were made *a parte poſt.*
'*A parte poſt!* theſe words ſo hard
'In Latin though I ſpeak 'em,
'Their meaning in plain Engliſh is,
'He made pure *Album Græcum.*

'This definition rather goes a ſtep beyond that of
'the clergyman, as it explains the words a *parte poſt*
'by *Album Græcum*, which are more obſcure than the
'former, and neither of which, out of my great re-
'gard to decency, I chooſe to tranſlate.---Whether
'Dr Johnſon compoſed his dictionary, after hearing
'the above-mentioned clergyman's ſermon, or not,
'I cannot tell, but he ſeems very much to have ta-
'ken him for his model, even though the ſaid cler-
'gyman was a Preſbyterian, and Dr Johnſon has an
'averſion at Preſbyterians. Thus, when he tells
'us, that *ſhort* is *not long*, and that *long* is *not ſhort*, he

'certainly

' certainly might as well have told us that a thief is a ' man of a thieviſh diſpoſition. I am ſurpriſed indeed ' how the intellects of a human creature could be ' obſcured by pedantry, and the love of words, to ' ſuch a degree, as to inſert this diſtinction in a book, ' pretended to be written for the inſtruction and be- ' nefit of ſociety. Much more am I ſurpriſed how ' the authors of all dictionaries of the Engliſh lan- ' guage have followed the ſame ridiculous plan, as if ' they had poſitively intended to make their books ' as little valuable as poſſible. Nay, I am almoſt ' tempted to think, that the readers have a natural ' inclination to peruſe nonſenſe, and cannot be ſatis- ' fied without a conſiderable quantity of that ingre- ' gredient in every book which falls into their hands. ' *Long* and *ſhort* are terms merely relative, and which ' every body knows; to explain them therefore by ' one another, is to explain them by themſelves. But ' beſides this ridiculous way of explaining a thing by ' itſelf, pedants, of whom we may juſtly reckon Dr ' Johnſon the Prince, have fallen upon a moſt inge- ' nious method of explaining the Engliſh by the *La-* ' *tin*, or ſome other language ſtill further beyond the ' reach of vulgar ken. Thus, when Dr Johnſon de- ' fines *fire*, he tells us it is the *igneous element*. *To* ' *water* (the verb) he tells us, is to *irrigate*, by which ' no doubt we are greatly edified. *To do* is to *prac-* ' *tiſe*, and *to practiſe* is *to do*, &c.

' But the moſt curious kind of definitions are theſe ' œnigmatical ones of our author, by which he in- ' duſtriouſly prevents the reader from knowing the ' meaning of the words he explains. Thus, the *hair* ' he tells us is one of the common *teguments* of the ' body; but this will not diſtinguiſh it from the ſkin, ' and ſhews the extreme poverty of judgment under ' which the Doctor laboured, when he could not ' point out the diſtinguiſhing mark between the hair ' and ſkin. A dog is " a domeſtic animal remarka- " bly various in his ſpecies," but this does not di-

' ſtinguiſh

'ſtinguiſh him, except to natural hiſtorians, from a 'cow, a ſheep, or a hog; for of theſe there are alſo 'different *breeds* or ſpecies. A cat is "a domeſtic "animal that catches mice;" but this may be ſaid of 'an owl, or a dog; for a dog will catch mice if he 'ſees them, though he does not watch for them as a 'cat does. Nay, if we happen to overlook the word '*animal*, or not to underſtand it, we may miſtake 'the cat for a mouſe-trap. The earth, according to 'our learned author, is "the element diſtinct from "fire, air, or water;" but this may be light or e-'lectricity as well as earth.---Air is "the element en-"compaſſing the terraqueous globe;" but an un-'learned reader would be very apt to miſtake this 'for the ocean, &c.

'When the Doctor comes to his *learned* definitions, 'he outdoes, if poſſible, his œnigmatical ones. Net-'work is "any thing *reticulated* or *decuſſated* at equal "diſtances." A noſe is "the prominence on the face "which is the organ of ſcent, and the emunctory of "the brain."---The heart is "the muſcle which by "its contraction and dilatation propells the blood "through the courſe of circulation, and is therefore "conſidered as the ſource of vital motion."---Now 'let any perſon conſider for whom ſuch ſtrange de-'finitions can poſſibly be intended. To give inſtruc-'tion to the ignorant they certainly are not deſign-'ed; neither can they give ſatisfaction to the learn-'ed, becauſe they are not accurate. The noſe, for 'inſtance, he ſays is the emunctory of the brain; but 'every anatomiſt knows that it performs no ſuch of-'fice, neither hath the noſe any communication with 'the brain, but by means of its nerves.---Yet this 'dictionary is reckoned the beſt Engliſh one extant. 'What then muſt the reſt be; or what ſhall we think 'of thoſe who miſtake a book, ſtuffed with ſuch ſtu-'pid aſſemblages of words, for a *learned* compoſition? 'Definitions undoubtedly are neceſſary, but not 'ſuch as give us no information, or lead us aſtray.

'Neither

'Neither can any thing ſhew the ſagacity, or ſtrength 'of judgment, which a man poſſeſſes, more clearly 'than his being able to define exactly what he ſpeaks 'about; while ſuch blundering deſcriptions as theſe, 'above quoted, ſhew nothing but the Doctor's inſig-'nificance *.'

That the courteous reader may be qualified to judge for himſelf, I ſhall now inſert a variety of quotations from this wonderful, amazing, admirable, aſtoniſhing, incomparable, immortal, and inimitable book. Too much cannot be ſaid in its praiſe. I ſhall however let it ſpeak for itſelf. Every page, indeed, is ſo pregnant with ſuperexcellent beauties, that in ſelecting them, the critic's ſituation reſembles that of the ſchoolman's aſs between two bundles of hay; his only difficuly is where to begin. The pious huſband of Bathſheba had aſked 'What is MAN?' But let it be told in Rome, and publiſhed in the ſtreets of Paris, to the honour of the Engliſh nation, that her greateſt philoſopher has received 300l. a-year for informing us that—

MAN is a 'Human being. 2. Not a woman. 3. Not 'a boy. 4. *Not a beaſt.*' Woman. 'The female of 'the human race.' Boy. '1. A male child; not 'a girl. 2. One in the ſtate of *adoleſcence*. Girl. 'A 'young woman or child.' (*Female* child he ſhould 'have ſaid.) Damſel. 'A young gentlewoman; a 'wench; a country laſs.' Laſs. 'A girl; a maid; 'A young woman.' Wench. '1. A young wo-'man. 2. A young woman in contempt. 3. A ſtrum-'pet.' Strumpet. 'A whore, a proſtitute.' Whore. '1. A woman who converſes unlawfully with men; 'a fornicatreſs; an adultreſs; a ſtrumpet. 2. a pro-'ſtitute; a woman who receives men for money.' To whore, *v. n.* (from the noun) 'To converſe un-'lawfully with the other ſex.' To whore, *v. a.* 'To 'corrupt with regard to chaſtity.' Whoredom, *ſ.* (from whore) 'Fornication.' (Here follow ſeveral



* Weekly Mirror, No. 12.

other definitions on the ſame pure ſubject, which every body underſtands as well as Dr Johnſon.) Young. 'Being in the firſt part of life. *Not old.*' Youngſter, younker. 'A young perſon.' (I paſs by *ten* other articles, about *youthful* compounded of *youth* and *full*, &c &c. becauſe young people are in no danger of thinking themſelves old.) Yuck, *ſ.* (*jocken*, Dutch.) 'Itch.' Old. 'Paſt the middle part of life; *not* 'young; not new; ancient; not modern. Of old. 'Long ago; from ancient times.' Hum, interj. 'A 'ſound implying doubt and deliberation, *Shakeſpeare.*' Fiddlefaddle, *ſ.* (a cant word) 'Trifles.' Fiddlefaddle, *a.* 'Trifling; giving trouble.'

(——His own example ſtrengthens all his laws,
Sam is himſelf the true ſublime he draws.)

Fiddler, *ſ.* (from *fiddle.*) 'A muſician, one that plays 'upon a fiddle.' Here follow fiddleſtick, compounded of fiddle and ſtick, and warranted an Engliſh word by Hudibras; and Fiddle-ſtring, *ſ.* (Fiddle and ſtring) 'the ſtring of a fiddle. *Arbuthnot.*' Sheep's eye. '*A* '*modeſt and diffident look, ſuch as lovers caſt at their* '*miſtreſſes.*' Love. 'Lewdneſs.' And *thirteen* other explanations. *Lovemonger.* 'One who deals in affairs 'love.' (Beſides about twenty other articles concerning this ſubject of equal obſcurity and importance) Sweetheart. 'A lover or miſtreſs.' Miſtreſs. 'A woman beloved and courted; a whore, a con-'cubine.' Wife. 'A woman that has a huſband.' A Runner. 'One who runs.' Huſband. 'The *cor-*'*relative* to wife.' Shrew. '*A peeviſh, malignant, cla-*'*morous, ſpiteful, vexatious, turbulent woman.*' Scold. '*A clamorous, rude, mean, low, foul mouthed woman.*' Henpecked, *a.* (*hen* and *pecked*) 'Governed by the 'wife.' Strap. 'A narrow long ſlip of cloth or *lea-*'*ther.*' Whip. 'An inſtrument of correction *tough* 'and *pliant.*' Cuckingſtool, *ſ.* 'An engine invent-'ed for the puniſhment of ſcolds and *unquiet* women.' Cuckoldom. 'The ſtate of a cuckold.' (Cuckold, *ſ.* Cuckold, *v. a.* Cuckoldy, *a.* and Cuckoldmaker, *ſ.*

(compounded

(compounded of *cuckold*, and *maker*) I leave out, as the reader is, perhaps, already initiated in the myſteries of that ſubject.) Arſe, *ſ.* 'The buttocks.' To hang an arſe. 'To be tardy, ſluggiſh.' Buttock. 'The rump, the part near the *tail*.' Rump. '1. The 'end of the backbone. 2. The buttocks.' Thimble. 'A metal cover by which women (yea and *taylors* 'too Doctor) ſecure their fingers from the needle.' Needle. 'A ſmall inſtrument pointed at one end to 'pierce cloth, and *perforated* at the other to receive 'the thread.' Gunpowder. '*The powder put into* '*guns to be fired.*' Maidenhead. Maidenhode. Maidenhood. 'Virginity, virgin purity, freedom from 'contamination.' Oh, *interj* 'An exclamation de-'noting pain, ſorrow, or ſurpriſe.' Hope '*that* '*which gives* HOPE. *The object of* HOPE' Fear. '1. 'Dread; horror; apprehenſion of danger. 2. Awe; 'dejection of mind. 3. Anxiety, ſolicitude,' &c. Impatience. 'Heat of paſſion; *inability* to ſuffer de-'lay, eagerneſs.' Virgin. '*A woman not a mother.*' Virginity. 'Maidenhead; unacquaintance with man.' Fart. 'Wind from behind. *Suckling.*' To fart. 'To 'break wind behind. *Swift.*' Marriage. 'The 'act of uniting a man and woman for life.' Repentance. 'Sorrow for any thing paſt.' Kiſs. 'Salute gi-'ven by joining lips.' Kiſſer. 'One that Kiſſes.' To piſs, *v. n.* 'To make water. *L'Eſtrange.*' Piſs *ſ.* (from the verb) 'Urine; animal water. *Pope* Piſs-burnt, *a.* 'Stained with urine.' Pedant. 'A man 'vain of *low* knowledge.'

Of theſe extracts, I ſuppoſe opinion is uniform. Every man who reads them, reads them with contempt. To tell us that a *man* is not a *beaſt*, ſeems to be an inſult, rather than a definition. To ſay, that *young* is *not old*, and, that *old* is *not young*, *of old*, &c. is to ſay nothing at all. There is a medium; there is a ſtate between theſe periods of life. And his definitions convey no meaning; for a man may be *not old* tho' he is *not young*. Many articles, ſuch as whoring,

'whoremaſter

whoremaſter, whoremonger, whoriſhly, &c. are as indecent, as they are impertinent. and ſeem only deſigned to divert ſchool boys Hum, Yuck, Fiddle, Fiddler, Fiddlefaddle, *ſ* Fiddlefaddle, *a* Fiddleſtick, Fiddleſtring, Thimble, Needle, Gunpowder, Hope, O, and O---and Oh, and twenty-eight or thirty explanations of the particle *on*, are left without remark to the reader's penetration. Some are well enough acquainted with a *maidenhead*, and ſuch as are not, will be no wiſer by reading Dr Johnſon: For he ſays, That it is *virginity*, and that again is explained (like more than half the words in his book) by the word it explains. Neither can a *maidenhead* enſure freedom from *pollution*; for a girl may be polluted, without loſing her *maidenhead*; and on the other hand, the Doctor dare not ſay that a *married* woman is, for that reaſon, *polluted*. Love, he calls *lewdneſs*, and he may as well ſay, that *light* is *darkneſs*. His admirers will anſwer, that he alſo gives the right meaning; but let them tell, why he gave any beſides the right meaning, and why he collected ſuch a load of blunders into his book. Or ſince he did collect them, why he did not mark them down as wrong. For in the preface to his octavo, he tells us, that it is written for 'explaining terms of ſcience' But to ſelect twenty barbarous miſapplications of a word, is not explaining the word, but only *confuſion worſe confounded*. Indeed that whole preface is a piece of the moſt profound nonſenſe, which ever inſulted the common ſenſe of the world. A virgin, is *a woman not a mother*. But many wives, and many concubines too, have never propagated the ſpecies, though they had (as Othello ſays) a thouſand times committed the act of ſhame From this literary chaos, a foreigner would be apt to imagine that *they* were *virgins*.

Corking pin. 'A pin of the largeſt ſize.' Bum. '*The part upon which we ſit.*' Butter. 'An *unctuous* 'ſubſtance.' Buttertooth. '*The* great broad fore-'tooth.' Off. prep. '*Not on.*' Potato. 'An *eſ-*

'*culent*

*culent* root.' Turnip. 'A white *eſculent* root.' Par-
ey, 'A plant.' Parſnep. 'A plant.' Colliflower.
*Cauliflower.*' Cauliflower. 'A ſpecies of *cabbage.*'
abbage. 'A plant.' Pit. 'A hole in the ground.'
in. 'A ſhort wire, with a ſharp point, and round
head, uſed by women to faſten their cloaths.' Plate.
A ſmall ſhallow veſſel of metal (or of ſtone or wood
Doctor) on which meat is eaten.' Play. '*Not work.*'
oker. 'The iron bar with which *men* ſtir the fire.'
ork. 'Swine's fleſh *unſalted.*' (Here you may find
*orker*, *Porkeater*, *Porket*, *Porkling*, with all their de-
vations, definitions, and authorities.) Porridge.
Food made by boiling meat in water.' Porridge-
ot, (*porridge* and *pot*) 'The pot in which meat is
boiled for a family.' Porringer, (from *porridge*) 'a
veſſel in which broth is eaten.' Part. '*Some thing*
*leſs than the whole.*' And *thirteen* other *ramifications.*
ulſe. '*Oſcillation; vibration.*' Puff. 'A quick blaſt
with the mouth.' Vid. in ſame page, Pudding, *ſ.*
om the *Swediſh*, (which is a miſtake, for it is from
e French *boudin*) *Pudding Pie*, from *Pudding* and
*ie*, and *Pudding-time*, from *Pudding* and *time.* Pud-
e, *ſ.* Puddle, *v. a.* & Puddly, &c. Shadow. '*O-*
*pacity*, darkneſs, *Shade.*' Shade. 'The cloud or
*opacity* made by interception of the light.' Dark-
eſs. 'Obſcurity. *Umbrage.*' Shadineſs, 'The ſtate
of being *ſhady; umbrageouſneſs.*' Shady. 'Full of
*ſhade*; MILDLY *gloomy.*'

(No light, but rather darkneſs viſible.)

Sevenſcore. 'Seven times twenty.' Shadowy.
Dark, *opake.*' To yawn. 'To gape, to *oſcitate*,'
awn, *ſ.* '*Oſcitation*, HIATUS. Yea 'Yes.' Yes,
A term of affirmation, the affirmative particle op-
poſed to *no.*' See alſo in the ſame place, Yeſt. Year.
2 months.) Yeſterday, *ſ.* The day laſt paſt, the next
y before to-day. Yeſterday, *ad.* Yeſternight, *ſ.*
eſternight, *ad.* Yet, *con.* Yet, *ad* Nine times ex-
ained. Vent. 'A ſmall *aperture*; a hole; a *ſpiracle.*'
Vind. 'A *flowing* wave of air; *flatulence*; windineſs.'

Winker.

Winker. ‘ One who winks.’ To wink. ‘ To ſhut ‘ the eyes.’

(No, Sir, unleſs you open them again directly.)

Window. ‘ An *aperture* in a building by which air ‘ and light are *intromitted*.’ *N. B.* Almoſt the whole of the ſame page is daubed over with ſuch jargon. Said. ‘ Aforeſaid.’ Scoundrel. ‘ A mean raſcal; a ‘ low petty villain.’ Raſcal. ‘ A mean fellow; a ‘ ſcoundrel.’ Villain. ‘ A wicked wretch.’ Wretch. ‘ A miſerable mortal. No, *ad.* ‘ The word of refu- ‘ ſal. 2. The word of denial.’ No, *a.* ‘ 1. Not a- ‘ ny; NONE. 2. *No one*; NONE: *not any one*.’ (Had this word *none* altered its meaning, before the Doctor got to the end of the line?) Nobody. (*No* and *body*) ‘ No one; not any one.’ (See alſo Nod, *v. a.* Nod, *ſ.* Nodder. Noddle. Noddy, &c.) None. ‘ 1. Not ‘ one. 2. Not any. 3. Not other.’ Nothing. ‘ *Ne- ‘ gation* of being; not any thing,’ and *ſeventeen* other definitions. Afore. (*a* and *fore*) ‘ *before*, nearer in ‘ place to any thing.’

‘ There is a certain line, beyond which, if ridicule ‘ attempts to go, it becomes itſelf ridiculous, and ‘ there is a ſphere of criticiſm in that particular re- ‘ gion, in which, if the critic plays his batteries on too ‘ *contemptible* objects, he muſt unavoidably depart ‘ from his proper dignity, and muſt himſelf be an ob- ‘ ject of the raillery he would convey *.’

HEAR THE DOCTOR ON MUSIC.

Muſic. ‘ 1. The ſcience of *harmonical* ſounds. 2. In- ‘ ſtrumental, or vocal *harmony*.’ Harmony. ‘ Juſt ‘ proportion of ſound.’ Melody. ‘ Muſic; *harmony* ‘ of ſound.’ Tune. ‘ *Tune* is a diverſity of notes put ‘ together.’ *Locke*, *Milton*, *Dryden*. Tenour, *ſ.* ‘ A ‘ *ſound* in muſic.’

One requires little ſkill in muſic to ſee that the Doctor knows nothing of that ſcience. He confounds *melody* with *harmony*; the one conſiſting in a ſucceſſi- on of agreeable ſounds, and the other ariſing from co- exiſting

* Monthly Review, on Dr Graham's Pindaricks.

exiſting ſounds. His account of a *tune* is curious. And we may ſay in his own ſtile, that his dictionary is 'a diverſity of *words* put together.' His numerous omiſſions on this head will neither afflict, nor ſurpriſe us; but we muſt be mortified and amazed to reflect on the partial and injurious diſtribution of fame. For his book exhibits in every page, perhaps without a ſingle exception, a variety of errors and abſurdities. They are clear to the darkeſt ignorance. They are level to the loweſt underſtanding, and yet our language is exhauſted in praiſe of *their* author. *Pronis animis audiendum!*

Poem. 'The work of a poet; a *metrical* compoſi-'tion.' Poet. 'An inventor; an author of fiction; 'a writer of poems; one who writes in meaſure.' Poeteſs. 'A *ſhe* poet.' Poetry. '*Metrical* compoſi-'tion; the art or practice of writing poems. 2. Po-'ems, poetical pieces.' *To circumſcribe poetry by a* DEFINITION *will only ſhew the narrowneſs of the definer* *. Tragedy. 'A dramatic repreſentation of a '*ſerious* action.' Comedy. 'A dramatic repreſentation 'of the *lighter faults* of mankind.' Eclogue. 'A pa-'ſtoral poem, ſo called, becauſe Virgil called his pa-'ſtorals eclogues.' Tragic-comedy. 'A drama com-'pounded of *merry* and *ſerious* events.' Farce. 'A 'dramatic repreſentation written *without* regularity.' Elegy. '1. A mournful ſong. 2. A funeral ſong. 3. 'A ſhort poem, without points or turns.' Idyl. 'A 'ſmall ſhort poem.' Epigram. 'A ſhort poem ter-'minating in a *point*.' Epic, *a*. 'Narrative; com-'priſing narrations, not acted, but rehearſed. It is 'uſually ſuppoſed to be heroic.' Epiſtle. 'A letter;' and a letter again is 'an epiſtle.' Ode. 'A poem 'written to be *ſung* to muſic; a lyric poem.' Ballad. 'A ſong.' Song. 'A poem to be *modulated* by 'the voice.' Catch. 'A ſong ſung in *ſucceſſion*.'

I believe that Dr Johnſon has written better verſes than any man now alive in England. He is ſaid to be the

* Dr Johnſon's life of Pope.

the firſt critic in that country, and therefore we had the higheſt reaſon to expect elegant entertainment and philoſophical inſtruction, when the poet and critic was to ſpeak in his own character.

But here, as in the reſt of this work, the native vigour of his mind ſeems entirely to leave him. We look around us in vain for the well known hand of the Rambler, for the ſenſible and feeling hiſtorian of Savage, the cauſtic and elegant imitator of Juvenal, the man of learning, and taſte, and genius. The reader's eye is repelled from the Doctor's pages, by their hopeleſs ſterility, and their horrid nakedneſs.

Moſt of the definitions in this work may be divided into three claſſes; the erroneous, œnigmatical, and ſuperfluous. And of the nineteen laſt quoted, every one comes under ſome, or all of theſe heads.

A poem is ſaid to be the work of a *poet*: And ſo were Dryden's prefaces. Again it is *a metrical compoſition*. No age had ever a greater profuſion of rhimes than the preſent. In Oxford there are two thouſand perſons all of whom can occaſionally make verſes. Yet in this abundance of *metrical compoſition*, we have very few poems.

A poet is—1. '*An inventor*,' but ſo was Tubal Cain. 2. '*An author of fiction*,' but ſo was Des Cartes. 3. '*A writer of poems*; but as he has not been able to point out what a poem is, the definition goes for nothing. 4. 'One who writes *in meaſure*.' But in Cowley's life, the Doctor himſelf ſpeaks of men, who thought they were writing *poetry*, when they were only writing *verſes*. We are ſtill exactly where we ſet out.

The third definition is ſuperfluous, and the fourth is very clumſy. The fifth and ſixth are ſtill worſe, for comedy * is frequently very *ſerious* and tender, as well as tragedy; and that again repreſents the *lighter* faults of mankind, as well as comedy. By the way, what are theſe *lighter* faults, which our comedy is ſaid to repreſent. In our comic

* Vide Terence and the Careleſs Huſband.

mic ſcenes, adultery, and profaneneſs, appear to be the chief pulſe of merriment. What the Doctor ſays of a farce is not true, nor is elegy *always* mournful *. What can he mean by a poem without points or turns? An Idyll is a ſmall ſhort poem. An Epigram is a *ſhort* poem; but ſo is an Epitaph, or a Sonnet, and often an Ode, a Fable, &c. An Epigram terminates in a *point*. Wonderful! Of the reſt of theſe definitions, the reader will determine whether they be not every one of them pitiful; and if it was poſſible for the Doctor, or any other man, to convey *leſs* information, on ſo plain a ſubject.

'In comparing this with other dictionaries of the 'ſame kind, it will be found that the ſenſes of each 'word are more *copiouſly* enumerated, and more 'clearly explained †.'

Of his *clear* and *copious* explanations, here is an additional ſpecimen.

Beaſt. 'An animal diſtinguiſhed from birds, in-'ſects, fiſhes, and man.' It is alſo diſtinguiſhed from *reptiles*, though the Doctor cannot tell us *how*. A Reptile is (but ſometimes only) '*An animal that creeps* '*upon many feet.*' A Snail is 'A ſlimy animal that 'creeps upon plants.' Many animals creep on plants beſides a Snail. He dare not venture to ſay that a Snail is *a Reptile*, for he had ſaid that a Reptile creeps upon many feet, and a Snail has none. Locke is quoted to prove that a *Bird* is a *fowl*, and we are edified by hearing that a *fowl* is a '*bird*, or a *winged* 'animal.' But this may be the butterfly, the bat, or the flying fiſh. He ſhould have ſaid a *feathered* animal. We are informed from Creech and Shakeſpeare, that a fiſh is *an animal that inhabits the water*. But beſides amphibious animals, from the crocodile down to the water-mouſe, we have ſeen *Erucæ Aquaticæ*, or Water Caterpillars, which are truly aquatic animals, yet are perfectly different from all fiſh. In-



* Vide Dr Johnſon's life of Shenſtone.

† Vide Preface to Dr Johnſon's octavo Dictionary, 4th edition.

fects are 'ſo called from a ſeparation in the middle of 'their bodies, whereby they they are cut into two 'parts, which are joined together by a ſmall ligature, 'as we ſee in common flies.'

*Quere.* How many inſects anſwer this deſcription?

Dr Johnſon had certainly no great occaſion to quote Peacham and Swift before he durſt tell us, (as he does) that a *Lily* is a *flower*, and *Poſteriors* the *hinder* parts. He forgot to introduce the Dean when affirming, that a T——d is *excrement*; but both Pope and Swift (among others) are cited for P—ſs and F—t.

His learning and his ignorance amaze us in every page. Pox are, '1. *Puſtules; efflorescencies; exanthe-* 'matous eruptions. 2. The venereal diſeaſe.' A particular ſpecies of it *only*. The firſt part of this *clear* explanation would puzzle every old woman in England, though moſt of them know more of ſmall pox than the Rambler himſelf.

Day. '1. The time between the riſing and the ſet- 'ting of the ſun, called the *artificial* day. 2. The 'time from noon to noon, called the *natural* day.' Natural. 'What is produced by nature,' therefore as the day from ſunriſe to ſunſet is 'produced by na- 'ture,' *that*, and that only, muſt be the *natural* day. Artificial. 'Made by *art*, not natural, fictitious, not 'genuine.' The day from noon to noon is certainly *not* natural, and of conſequence, *that*, and that only, muſt be the *artificial* day.

Night is, '1. The time of darkneſs. 2. The time 'between ſunſet, and ſunriſe.' When the Doctor acquires the firſt elements of geography, he will learn, that in no climate of the world is the time between ſunſet and ſunriſe all of it a time of *darkneſs*. Even at the equator, night does not ſucceed till half an hour after ſunſet. If he has ever ſeen the ſun riſe here, he muſt alſo have ſeen that we have always day light long before the ſun appears. In June our nights are never entirely dark. Neither is *night*, when it really comes on, conſtantly the 'time of 'darkneſs,'

'darkneſs,' for the Doctor may frequently ſee to read his own miſtakes by moonſhine. Of this profound period, the firſt part contradicts the ſecond, and every body ſees the abſurdity of both. What are we to think of ſuch a definer of 'ſcientific terms,' when his errors have not even the negative merit of conſiſtency.

Snowbroth, *ſ.* (*ſnow* and *broth*) 'very cold liquor.' And Shakeſpeare is quoted; but when the poet ſaid * that the blood of an old courtier was as cold as *Snowbroth*, he meant *melted ſnow*. Now it is ſomewhat odd that every body can ſee Shakeſpeare's idea exactly, except this learned commentator. Lion. 'The fierceſt 'and moſt magnanimous of four-footed beaſts.' But fierceneſs cannot conſiſt with magnanimity †. Other animals exceed the Lion in fierceneſs; and a Horſe, an Elephant, or a Dog, equal his magnanimity. This definition contains nothing but a glaring contradiction, of which neither end is true! Thunder. 'Thunder is 'a moſt *bright flame* riſing on a ſudden, moving with 'great violence, and with a very *rapid* velocity, 'through the air, *according* to any determination, 'and commonly ending with a loud noiſe or rat-'tling.' *Shakeſpeare. Milton.*

It is needleſs to ſay that the learned and ingenious Penſioner has confounded thunder with lightning. The inelegance and tautology of this definition I paſs by; but why ſhould he profane the names of Milton and Shakeſpeare to ſupport ſuch monſtrous nonſenſe?

Stone. 'Stones are bodies inſipid, hard, not *ductile* 'or *malleable*, nor *ſoluble* in water.' This definition anſwers wood, or glaſs, or the bones of an animal. One. 'Leſs than two; ſingle; denoted by an unit.' *Raleigh.*

Without conſulting Raleigh, we know that a man may have 'leſs than *two*' guineas in his pocket, and yet have more than *one*. But ſtill we are not ſure, that

* Vide Meaſure for meaſure. † Vide Dictionary.

that he has even a ſingle farthing. One is *ſingle*, but we are only where we ſtarted, for *ſingle (more Lexiphanico)* is ‘ *one*, not double; not more than one.’ The matter is little mended, when he ſubjoins that one is *that which is expreſſed by an unit*, for this may be the numerator of *any* fraction. Take his book to pieces, put it into the ſcales of common ſenſe, and ſee how it kicks the beam.

A circle is, ‘ 1. A line continued till it ends where it began. 2. The ſpace incloſed in a *circular* line. 3. A round body, an orb.’

The firſt of theſe definitions does not diſtinguiſh a circle from a triangle, or any other plain figure. He might have found a circle properly defined in Euclid, and a hundred other books. What are we to think of the reſt of his mathematical definitions? Well, but he clears up this point, for a circle is ‘ the *ſpace in-* ‘ *cloſed* in a *circular* line.’ The third definition is no leſs erroneous than the ſecond, for if a man were to mention the circle of the earth, we could not ſuſpect that he meant the globe itſelf.

Botany and the electrical fluid, are not inſerted. Electricity he terms *a property* in bodies. From this expreſſion, and from all he ſays on the ſubject, we can aſcertain his ignorance of that moſt curious and important branch of natural philoſophy. *Electricity* in general ſignifies ‘ the operations of a very ‘ ſubtile fluid, commonly inviſible, but ſometimes ‘ the object of our ſight and other ſenſes. It is one of ‘ the chief agents employed in producing the phæno- ‘ mena of nature.’ Its identity with lightning was diſcovered in 1752, three years before the publication of Dr Johnſon's folio dictionary. For the author then to talk of it as ‘ a *peculiar* property, ſuppoſed once ‘ to belong chiefly to amber,’ is ſhameful. It ſhews us the depth of his learning, and the degree of attention which he thought proper to beſtow on his *great* work.

Elaſticity. ‘ Force in bodies, by which they endea-

‘ vour

'vour to *reſtore* themſelves.' To what? To their former figure, after ſome external preſſure? And without adding ſome words like theſe the definition conveys no meaning.

Of Water, we get a very long winded account, which neither Dr Johnſon nor any body elſe can comprehend, for he ſinks into mere jargon. Canſt thou conceive (gentle reader) what are 'ſmall, *ſmooth*, 'hard, *porous*, ſpherical particles' of water! *Water*, ſays Newton, 'is a fluid taſteleſs ſalt, which nature 'changes by heat, into vapour, and by cold into 'ice, which is a hard fuſible brittle ſtone, and this 'ſtone returns into water by heat *.' Boerhaave calls water, 'a kind of glaſs that melts at a heat any 'thing greater than 32 degrees of Farenheit's ther-'mometer. The boundary between water and ice †.'

Claw. 'The *foot* of a beaſt or bird armed with ſharp 'nails.' Nail. 'The talons of birds or beaſts.' Talon. 'The claw of a bird of prey.' *Dict. 4th edit.*

Here a *nail* is *talons;* Talons are a *claw;* and a claw is ſaid to be a *foot* (alias a *nail)* armed with *nails.* The quotations are literal and complete. The words are all plain Engliſh. And if you cannot comprehend *a nail armed with nails*, wait upon Dr Johnſon, and perhaps he will explain it.

Legion. 'A body of Roman ſoldiers, conſiſting of 'about *five* thouſand.'

This is not accurate. The number of men in a Roman legion roſe by degrees from about 3200 to about 7000.

Decemvirate. 'The dignity and office of the *ten* 'governors of Rome.' Tribune. 'An officer of 'Rome choſen by the people.' Cenſor. 'An officer 'of Rome, who had the power of correcting man-'ners.' Conſul. 'The chief magiſtrate in the Ro-'man republic.'

Wherein did the Decemviri differ from the King, the Conſul, the Dictator, the Triumvir, the Milita-

ry

* Optics, P. 349. † Chem. 1. P. 399. 614.

ry Tribune, the Cæsar, and the Emperor, for all these were likewise 'Governors of Rome?' The Decemviri were also an inferior set of men appointed to take care of the Sybil's books, to conduct colonies, &c. So that this definition is very incompleat. A Tribune was 'chosen by the people.' But this does not distinguish him from many other magistrates. The Censor had 'the power of correcting manners;' but he had other powers beside that, and every magistrate had that power as well as he, though it was a province more peculiarly his. The Censor is an officer still known in Venice, and in countries where the liberty and abuse of the press are unknown, the licensers of books are called Censors, though the Doctor does not give us these two explanations of the word. A Consul is 'the chief magi-'strate in the Roman republic.' He was a magistrate long after the republic was dissolved; for Caligula made his horse a Consul! But tho' the Consul was commonly *one* of the chief magistrates in Rome, he was never the *chief*, as the Doctor roundly expresses it, for he had always a colleague. The Censor was at least his equal, and the Dictator was by law his superior. What we learn of the Centurion, the Triumvir, and the Lictor, is very trifling. Innumerable words which puzzle the plain reader of a Roman historian are wanting, such as an Ædile, a Prætor, a Quæstor, a Cæsar, a Military Tribune, the Hastati, Principes, Triarii, Velites, the Labarum, or Imperial Standard, the Balistæ, the Balearians, &c. A *Maniple* is 'a small band of soldiers.' And a Cohort is 'a troop of soldiers, containing about 500 foot.' A Cohort was in general the tenth part of the foot in a Roman Legion, consequently their number varied, and the Prætorian Cohort, or that to which the standard was intrusted, contained, at least in latter ages, many more men than any of the rest. But in the very page where this concise author thus blunders about a Cohort, he takes care to tell us, that *Coition*, is *copulation*;

*pulation; the act of generation.* That cold is ‘ *not hot*, ‘ not warm, chill, having ſenſe of cold, having cold ‘ qualities.’ That *coldly* is ‘ *without heat.*’ that coldneſs is ‘ *want of heat;*’ and a heap of ſimilar jargon. Blot. ‘ A blur.’ Blur. ‘ A blot.’

The Doctor's admirers will anſwer, that in ſo large a work there was no room for full definitions. I reply, that his account of Whipgrafting, of Will-with-a-Wiſp, of a Wood-louſe, and of the Stool of Repentance, are very full; that if he was to ſay no more of a Roman Conſul, he ſhould have ſaid nothing at all; but that there are other books of the ſame kind, and of half the price too, which find room for copious and uſeful definitions. Pardon's dictionary is not much leſs than the Doctor's octavo, though its price is only ſix ſhillings; (7th edition) and of many uſeful articles, ſuch as the Roman Legion, there is a very clear and full explanation. Beſides which, it contains a deſcription of the counties, the cities, and the market towns in England; and in the end of the book there is inſerted a liſt of near 7000 proper names, none of which are to be found in the Doctor's dictionary. With what then has Dr Johnſon filled his book? With words of his own coining, with roots, and authorities often ridiculous, and always uſeleſs; or with definitions impertinent and erroneous. A Baſhaw he calls ‘ the viceroy of a province;’ and he might as well have ſaid that every man in England is ſix feet high. A Condoler is ‘ one who *compliments* ‘ another upon his misfortunes.’

From the Rambler's *accurate* and *profound* knowledge of anatomy, we muſt form very high expectations as to his knowledge of medicine, and we are not diſappointed; for ARTHRITIS is ‘ the Gout’ and the GOUT is ‘ Arthritis; a *periodical* diſeaſe attended ‘ with great pain.’ The firſt part of this definition is not true; and the ſecond will not diſtinguiſh the Gout from the Gravel, the Tooth-ach, &c. &c. GRAVEL is ‘ ſandy matter concreted in the kidneys,’ and

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as often in the bladder too. His account of a Gonorhœa is no leſs incomplete. A *Headach* is 'a pain 'in the head.' *Jaundice* is 'a diſtemper from ob-'ſtructions of the glands of the liver, which prevent 'the gall being duly ſeparated from the blood.' The Doctor ſeems to have borrowed his ſyſtem of anatomy from the antients; for the moderns have diſcovered that the liver (which he ingeniouſly calls 'one 'of the entrails') is itſelf an indiviſible gland. The Jaundice ariſes from an obſtruction in the biliary ducts. Tympany is 'a kind of obſtructed *flatulence*, that 'ſwells the body like a drum.' *Flatulence* is not inſerted; but Flatulency is ſaid to be 'windineſs; ful-'neſs of wind.' And what does he mean by an obſtructed fullneſs of wind, or by his elegant ſimile of a drum? His deſcriptions of the Rickets, Rupture, Rheumatiſm, Scrophula, Dropſy, Scurvy, &c. are equally perſpicuous and perfect. The Doctor had no great occaſion to atteſt, that '*the* Engliſh dictionary 'was written with little aſſiſtance of the *learned* *.' For in almoſt every department of learning, from aſtronomy down to the firſt principles of grammar, his ignorance ſeems amazing. His book is a maſs of words without ideas. Through the whole there runs a radical corruption of truth and common ſenſe. It is moſt aſtoniſhing that the *Idler* has hardly ever been attacked in this quarter by any of his innumerable invidious and inveterate enemies.

I anticipate the anſwer of his admirers, viz. That 'the *nature* of his work did not admit of a copious ex-'planation for every word.' But let them firſt tell why he gave ſuch a ſtrange jumble of quotations, to ſupport a word of which he himſelf knows not the meaning, and are we to be told that the *nature* of *any* work whatever, can entitle its author to write nonſenſe, or to write on a ſubject of which he knows nothing. Indeed the Doctor himſelf has repeatedly declared, that his book is deformed by a profuſion of errors, and

* Preface to Folio Dictionary.

and thoſe who decline to credit my aſſertion, ought, PERHAPS, to credit *his own.* He ſays, 'I cannot 'hope, in the warmeſt moments to preſerve ſo much 'caution through ſo long a work, as not OFTEN *to* '*ſink into negligence*, or to obtain ſo much knowledge 'of all its parts as not FREQUENTLY *to fail by igno-* '*rance.* I expect that ſometimes the deſire of accu- 'racy will urge me to ſuperfluities, and ſometimes 'the fear of prolixity betray me to *omiſſions*; that in 'the extent of ſuch variety, I ſhall be OFTEN *bewil-* '*dered*, and in the mazes of ſuch *intricacy* *, be *fre-* '*quently entangled*, &c.†' Here is a beautiful confeſſion, which he afterwards recants; for 'deſpon- 'dency has never ſo far prevailed, as to depreſs me 'to *negligence*,' &c. ‡ But his recantation is in effect immediately *re-recanted*, and we are informed, 'That 'a few *wild blunders*, and RISIBLE *abſurdities*, from 'which no work of ſuch multiplicity was ever free, '*may* for a time furniſh folly with laughter, and har- 'den ignorance into contempt §.' That this diſtruſt of his own merit did not ariſe from want of pride or vanity we diſcover within a few lines: For 'in this 'work' (*the* Engliſh dictionary, as its author modeſtly terms it) 'when it ſhall be found that *much is* '*omitted*, let it not be forgotten that *much* likewiſe *is* '*performed.* If our language is not here fully diſplay- 'ed, I have only failed in an attempt, which no hu- 'man powers have hitherto completed.—I may ſure- 'ly be contented without the praiſe of perfection, 'which *if* I could obtain, in this gloom of ſolitude' (*London*, or its neighbourhood) 'what would it avail 'me ‖?' And again, 'I have devoted this book, the 'labour of years, to the honour of my country ¶.' *Item.* 'I cannot but have ſome degree of parental 'fondneſs.' But after all this parental fondneſs, this zeal for the honour of his country, the Doctor's ex-

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* Perhaps he means, in defining *Thunder*, *Plum porridge*, the particle *But*, &c.

† Letter to the Earl of Cheſterfield.

‡ Preface to folio dictionary. § Ibid. ‖ Ibid. ¶ Ibid.

'traordinary preface concludes in perhaps the moſt extraordinary language that ever flowed from an author's pen. 'Succeſs and miſcarriage are *empty ſounds*, 'I therefore diſmiſs it' (his dictionary) 'with frigid 'tranquillity, having little to fear or *hope* from cen-'ſure, or from praiſe.' All this is ſurely deſpicable. The bookſellers had paid their workman on the nail, or the Doctor would have had ſomething to hope and fear. But an honeſt and ſenſible tradeſman, though paid before-hand, will always wiſh and endeavour to pleaſe his employers. From this writer's own words, it would appear that he is incapable of a ſentiment ſo generous.

Bawd. 'A Procurer, or Procureſs.' To bawd, *v. n.* 'To procure.' Bawdily (from *bawdy*) 'obſcene-'ly.' Bawdineſs (from *bawdy*) 'obſceneneſs.' Bawdry, *ſ.* '1. A wicked practiſe of procuring and bring-'ing whores and *rogues* together. 2. Obſcenity.' Bawdy, *a.* (from *bawdy*) 'Obſcene, unchaſte.' Bawdyhouſe. 'A houſe where traffic is made by wicked-'neſs and debauchery.' Baggage. 'A worthleſs wo-'man.' Bitch. '1. The female of the *canine* kind. '2. A name of reproach for a woman.' Blackguard *. 'A dirty fellow. Block. 'A Blockhead.' Block-head. 'A ſtupid fellow; a dolt; a man without 'parts,' Blunderer. 'A blockhead.' Blockhead 'A 'ſtupid fellow' Bloodletter. '*A Phlebotomiſt.*' Suds. '*A Lixivium* of ſoap and water.' Sun. 'The lumi-'nary that makes the day.'

*The* Engliſh dictionary is prodigiouſly defective---*Nervi deſunt.* It has no force of thought. This wilderneſs of words diſplays a mind, patient, but almoſt incapable of reaſoning; ignorant, but oppreſſed by a load of frivolous ideas; proud of its own powers, but languiſhing in the laſt ſtage of hopeleſs debility. We have long extolled it with the wildeſt luxuriance of adulation, and we pretend to deſpiſe the worſhippers of *the golden calf.* No

* It is ſaid that this word is not to be found in any book previous to the reign of James II. and that it was derived from the Prieſts who ſurrounded him.

No man has done more honour to England, than Mr Locke. What would he have ſaid or thought, had Dr Johnſon's dictionary been publiſhed in his days? We can eaſily determine his opinion from ſeveral paſſages in his works. I ſelect the following, becauſe it is both ſhort and deciſive; and he who feels any reſpect for Mr Locke will retain little for the author of the Rambler. His words are theſe: 'If 'any one aſks *what this ſolidity is* *, I ſend him to 'his ſenſes to inform him. Let him put a flint, or 'a football between his hands, and then endeavour 'to join them *and he will know*. If he thinks this not 'a ſufficient explication of *ſolidity*, what it is, and 'wherein it conſiſts, I promiſe to tell him, what it 'is, and wherein it conſiſts, when he tells me, what '*thinking* is, or wherein it conſiſts, or explains to me 'what *extenſion* or *motion* is, which perhaps ſeems much 'eaſier. The ſimple ideas we have are ſuch as expe-'rience teaches them us; but *if, beyond that, we en-'deavour by words to make them clearer* in the mind, we 'ſhall ſucceed no better, than if we went about to 'clear up the darkneſs of a blind man's mind by 'talking, and diſcourſe into him the ideas of light 'and colours †.'

In the title page of his octavo, we learn, that 'the 'words are deduced from their originals.' And in the preface, he adds, that 'the etymologies and de-'rivations, whether from foreign languages or na-'tive roots, are more diligently traced, and more 'diſtinctly noted, than in other dictionaries of the 'ſame kind.' Mr Whitaker aſſures us that in this ſingle article the Doctor has committed upwards of *three thouſand* errors: And the hiſtorical pioneer produces abundant evidence in ſupport of his aſſertion ‡. But independent of this curious circumſtance, let us aſk

* SOLIDITY. '1. Fullneſs of matter; *not hollowneſs*. 2. Firm-'neſs; hardneſs; compactneſs; *denſity*;' &c. &c. Dr Johnſon's dictionary. Every page is replete with jargon of this kind.

† Eſſay, &c. Book II. Chap. iv. Sect. 6.

‡ Hiſtory of Mancheſter, Vol. II.

aſk the Doctor what he means by crouding ſuch trifles into an abſtract, which is, he ſays, intended for thoſe who are 'to gain degrees of knowledge ſuitable to lower characters, or neceſſary to the common 'buſineſs of life.' To tell ſuch people, that the word *porridgepot* is compounded of *porridge*, and *pot*, is to inſult their underſtandings; and of his Greek and Saxon roots, not one individual in a thouſand can read even a ſingle letter. The preface commences with a pitiful untruth. Having mentioned the publication of his folio dictionary, he ſubjoins, 'it has *ſince* 'been conſidered that works of that kind are by no 'means neceſſary for the bulk of readers.' Here he would inſinuate that the *abſtract* was an *after-thought*: But every body ſees, that its publication was delayed, only to accelerate the ſale of his folio dictionary. There is not room now left, to diſſect every ſentence in the preface to his octavo. I ſhall therefore conclude that ſubject with one particular, wherein the Doctor's taſte, learning, and genius, blaze in their meridian.

In the title page to his octavo dictionary, we are informed, that the words are 'authoriſed by the names 'of the writers in whoſe works they are found.' And this tale is repeated at greater length in the preface, where 'it will be found that truth requires him to 'ſay leſs *: For under letter A only, there are between four and five hundred words, for which the *Idler* has not aſſigned any authority---and of theſe one hundred and eighty are to be found in no language under heaven. He boaſts indeed that his dictionary 'contains many words not to be found in any other.' But it alſo contains many words, not to be found at all in any other book. If we compute that letter A has a thirteenth part of theſe *recruits*, we ſhall find that the whole number ſcattered through his compilation exceeds two thouſand. A purchaſer of his *abſtract* has a title to aſk the Doctor, why the work is loaded with ſuch a profuſion of traſh, which ſerves only

* Preface to the octavo dictionary.

ly to teſtify the folly of him who collected or created it. Men of eminent learning have been conſulted, who diſown all acquaintance (in Engliſh) with moſt articles in the following liſt:

Abacus, Abandonement, Abarticulation, Abcedarian, Abcedary, Aberrant, Aberuncate, Abject, *v. a.* Ablactate, Ablactation, Ablation, Ablegate, Ablegation, Ablepſy, Abluent, Abraſion, Abſciſſa, Abſinthiated, Abſtention, Abſterge, Acceſſarineſs, Accidentalneſs, Accipient, Acclivious, Accolent, Accompanable, Accroach, Accuſtomarily. Acroamatical, Acronycal, Acroters, or Acroteria, Acuate, Aculerate, Addulce, Addenography, Ademption, Adiaphory, Adjectitious, *Adition*, Abſtergent, Acceptilation, Adjugate. Adjument, Adjunction, Adjunctive, Adjutor, Adjutory, Adjuvant, Adjuvate, Admenſuration, Adminicle, Adminicular, Admix, Admoniſhment, *Admurmuration*, Adſcititious, Adſtriction, Adveſperate, Adulator, Adulterant, Adulterine, Adumbrant, Advolation, Advolution, Aduſtible, Aerology, Aeromancy, Aerometry, Aeroſcopy, Affabrous, Affectuous, Affixion, Afflation, Afflatus, Agglomerate, Agnation, Agnition, Agreeingneſs, Alate, Abb, Alegar, Alligate, Alligation, Allocution, Amalgmate, Amandation, Ambidexterity, Ambilogy, Ambiloquous, Ambry, Ambuſtion, Amende, Amercer, Amethodical, *Amphibological*, *Amphibologically*, Amphiſch, Amplificate, Amygdalate, Amygdaline, Anacamptick. Anacampticks, *Anaclaſticks*, Anadiploſis, Anagogetical, Anagrammatize, Anamorphoſis, Anaphora, Anaſtomoſis, Anaſtrope, Anathematical, Androgynal, Androgynally, Androgynus, Anemography, Anemometer, *Anfractuouſneſs*, Angelicalneſs, *Angiomonoſpermous*, Angularity, Angularneſs, Anhelation, Aniented, Anileneſs, Anility, Animative, Annumerate, Annumeration, Annunciate, Anomalouſly, Anſated, Antaphroditick, Antapoplectick, Antarthritick, Antaſthmatick, Anteact, Auſcultation, Antemundane, Antepenult, Antepredicament, Anthology, Anthropoſophy

Anthropoſophy, Anthypnotick, Antichriſtianity, Auxiliation, Antinephritick, Antinomy, Antiquatedneſs, Apert, Apertly, Aphilanthrophy, Aphrodiſiacal, Aphrodoſiack, Apocope, Apocryphalneſs, Apomecometry, Appellatory, Apſis, Aptate, Aptote, Aqua, Aquatile, Aqueouſneſs, Aquoſe, Aquoſity, Araignee, Aratory, Arbuſcle, Archchanter, Archaiology, Archailogick, Archeus, Arcuation, Arenoſe, Arenulous, Argil, Argillaceous, Argute, Arietate, Ariſtocraticallneſs, Armental, Armentine, Armigerous, Armillary, Armipotence, Arrentation, Arreptitious, Arriſon, Authentickneſs, Arroſion, Articular, Articulateneſs, Auſtral, Arundinaceous, Arundineous, Aſbeſtine, Aſcriptitious, Aſinary, Aſperation, Aſperifolious, Aſpirate, *v. a.* Aſſaſſinator, Aſſumptive, Aſtoniſhingneſs, Aſtrography, Attiguous, Attinge, Aucupation, Avowee.

Of theſe words about forty only are proper, yet though they are ſo, and though they are frequently to be found in the beſt authors, yet the Doctor has not given any authority for them. His reading therefore muſt have been very circumſcribed, or his negligence very great. Is the word *Avowee*, for inſtance, one of thoſe which 'are, however, to be yet conſidered as 'reſting only upon the credit of former dictionaries*.' Beſides theſe forty, there are under letter A, ſome hundreds of the moſt common words, for which no author's name is quoted. A groſs omiſſion according to the plan which he lays down.

Let us put the caſe, that a foreigner ſits down to compoſe a page of Engliſh, by the help of Dr Johnſon's work. The ſtrange combinations of letters (for I dare not call them words) which ſwell his book to its preſent bloated ſize, are not marked with an aſteriſk, to diſtinguiſh them as barbarous: The novice would therefore adopt a ſtile unknown to any native of England. Here is a ſhort ſpecimen of what he would ſay.



* Vid. Preface to folio Dictionary.

'An *Admurmuration* has long wandered about the 'world, that the penſioner's political principles are 'anfractuous. Their *anfractuouſneſs*, their *inſipience*, 'and their *turpitude*, are no longer *amphibological*. 'His *nefarious repercuſſion* of *obloquy* muſt *contaminate*, 'and *obumbrate*, and who can tell but it may even 'aberuncate his *feculent* and *excrementitious celebrity*. 'His *perſpicacity* will ſee without *comity*, or *hilarity*, 'that his character as an author and a gentleman, re'quires *reſuſcitation*, for it is neither *immane* nor *im*'marceſſible. This is a *homogeneous* truth *. Let him 'diſtend, like the *flaccid* ſides of a football, his *ſal*, 'his *ſapience*, and his powers of *ratiocination*. The 'melliſluous and *numeroſe cadence* of *equiponderant* peri'ods cannot enſure him from a *luxation*, a *laceration*, 'and a *reſiliency* of his *adminicular concatenation* with 'the *rugged mercantile* race †. The loſs of this *adſci*'titious *adminicle* would make the ſage's *impeccable*, 'but *lugubrious* boſom vibrate with the horrors of 'dilution and *dereliction*. His organs of viſion would 'guſh with *ſalſamentarious* torrents of ſpherical parti'cles, of equal diameters, and of equal ſpecific gra'vities, as Dr Cheyne obſerves—their ſmoothneſs— 'their ſphericity—their frictions, and their hard'neſs,' §&c.

To the laſt edition (the 4th) of the folio dictionary, there is prefixed an advertiſement, from which I have extracted a few lines: 'Finding my dictionary about 'to be reprinted, I have endeavoured by a reviſal to 'make it leſs reprehenſible. I will not deny that I 'found *many parts requiring emendation*, and *many* 'more capable of improvement. *Many faults* I have cor'rected. ſome ſuperfluities I have taken away, and 'ſome deficiencies I have ſupplied. I have methodi'ſed ſome parts that were *diſordered*, and illumina'ted ſome that were *obſcure*. Yet the changes or ad-

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* Vide Life of Pope. † Vide Rambler.
‡ The Bookſellers, vide Life of Dryden.
§ Vide Dictionary, article WATER.

'ditions bear a very ſmall proportion to the whole.' That his improvements, bear a very ſmall proportion to the quantity of errors ſtill in his book is true, for after a long and painful ſearch, I have only been able to trace out ONE alteration. The word *Gazetteer* is now defined without that inſolent ſcurrility formerly quoted. But in this correct edition, thunder continues to be a *moſt bright flame*. Whig is ſtill the name of a faction; and a Tory is ſaid to be an adherent to the antient conſtitution of England. Oats, Exciſe, *Monarch*, &c. are all in the ſame ſtile. Nowiſe, *n. ſ.* '(*no* and *wiſe*: this is commonly ſpoken and written 'by IGNORANT BARBARIANS, *noways*). Not in any 'manner, or degree.' Theorem, *n. ſ.* 'A poſition 'laid down as an acknowledged truth.'

Here a ſchoolboy can detect the Doctor's ignorance, for every body knows that this word has the *oppoſite* meaning, which is indeed evident from the quotations that are intended to exemplify it.

'Having found this the head *theorem* of all their 'diſcourſes, we hold it neceſſary that the *proofs* there-'of be weighed.' *Hooker*. 'Here are three *theorems*, that '.from thence we may draw ſome concluſions *.' *Dryden*. No words can paint the Doctor's want of attention.

To piſs, *v. n.* (piſſer Fr. piſſen Dutch) 'To make 'water. I charge the *piſſing* conduit run nothing 'but claret. *Shakeſpeare*. One aſs piſſes, the reſt *piſs* 'for company. *L'Eſtrange*. The wanton boys *piſs* 'upon your grave. *Dryden*' Whoredom, *n. ſ.* (from *whore*) 'Fornication. Some let go *whoredom* as an 'indifferent matter. *Hale*.' Whoriſh, *a.* (from whore) 'Unchaſte, incontinent. By means of a '*whoriſh* woman a man is brought to a piece of 'bread. *Proverbs*. I had as lief you ſhould tell me 'of a meſs of *porridge* †.'

The reader has ſeen what a profuſion of low, and even blackguard expreſſions are to be met with in the Doctor's celebrated work. I ſhall now give an additional

* Dr Johnſon's Dictionary, 4th edition, folio. † Ibid.

additional ſpecimen of his *great* work; and, if, like ſome American ſavages, we cannot count our fingers, Dr Johnſon himſelf will teach us how to do it; forhe tells us,on *Shakeſpeare's* authority,that two is, 'one and 'one,' Pope and Creech are quoted to prove, that three is, 'two and one.' Four is, 'two and two;' and, if you have the leaſt doubt that 'four and one' make five, or that five is, 'the half of ten,' you will be ſilenced by the name of Dryden. Six is, 'twice 'three, one more than five.' Seven is, 'four and 'three, one more than ſix.' Eight is, 'twice four, 'a word of number.' Nine is, 'one more than 'eight.' Ninth is, 'that which precedes the tenth.' Ten is, 'the decimal number, twice five.' Tenth is, 'firſt after the ninth, the ordinal of ten.' Eleven is, 'ten and one.' Eleventh is, 'the next in order to 'the tenth, and is derived from eleven.' Twelve is, 'two and ten;' and twelfth, 'ſecond after the tenth, 'the ordinal of twelve.' Thirteen is, 'ten and three.' Fourteen is, 'four and ten.' Fifteen is, 'five and 'ten.' Fifteen, 'the ordinal of fifteen, the fifth 'after the tenth;' and, if you entertain any ſuſpicion as to the verity of theſe definitions, read over Boyle, Brown, Dryden, Moſes, Raleigh, Sandys, Shakeſpeare, and Bacon. Thirdly is, in the 'third 'place.' Thrice, 'three times,' threefold, 'thrice 'repeated, conſiſting of three' Threepence, (*three* and *pence*) 'a ſmall ſilver coin, valued at thrice a 'penny.' Threeſcore, a. (*three* and *ſcore*) 'thrice 'twenty, ſixty.' Pope, Raleigh, Wiſeman, Shakeſpeare, Brown, Dryden, and Spencer, are cited to convince you, that theſe explanations are accurate. And the other articles of numeration, with all their derivations, definitions, and the paſſages which are quoted to ſupport them, would fill a ſixpenny pamphlet. And this is one recipe for making a book worth four guineas!

A farthing is, 'the fourth part of a penny, and a 'penny is, *a ſmall coin* *, of which twelve make a

 'ſhilling.'

* It is needleſs to obſerve, that there is no ſuch coin in exiſtence

'ſhilling.' A ſhilling is 'now twelve pence.' A Pound is, 'the ſum of twenty ſhillings;' and, if thou haſt forgot the worth of a Guinea, know that it is 'a 'gold coin, valued at one and twenty ſhillings;' for Dryden, Locke, and Cocker, have ſaid all this. A Punk is, 'a whore, a common proſtitute;' and a Puppy is, 'a whelp, the progeny of a bitch, a name 'of contemptuous reproach to a man. To *Mew* is, 'to cry as a cat.' To Kaw is, 'to cry as a Raven, 'Crow, or Rook; and the cry of a Raven or Crow '(and he might have added, of a Jack Daw too) is 'kaw.'

'There are men (ſays Dr Johnſon) who claim the 'name of authors, merely to diſgrace it, and fill the 'world with volumes, only to bury letters in their 'own rubbiſh. The traveller who tells, in a pom-'pous Folio, that he ſaw the *Pantheon* at *Rome*, and 'the *Medicean Venus* at *Florence*; the natural hiſtorian, 'who, deſcribing the productions of a narrow iſland, 'recounts all that it has in common with every other 'part of the world; the collector of antiquities, that 'accounts every thing a curioſity, which the ruins 'of Herculaneum happen to emit, though an inſtru-'ment already ſhown in a thouſand repoſitories, or a 'cup common to the antients, the moderns, and all 'mankind, may be juſtly cenſured as the perſecutors 'of ſtudents, and the *thieves* of that time, which ne-'ver can be reſtored *.'

The traveller who viſits Rome and Florence, and gives an account of what he ſaw to the world, without deſcribing the Pantheon and the Medicean Venus, will, very properly, be cenſured as an ignorant and taſteleſs wanderer. The hiſtorian who deſcribes an iſland, whether wide or narrow, ought to begin by telling if it produces water, graſs, wood, and corn. A ſword, a bow, and a dagger, are common to the antients, the moderns, and almoſt all mankind; yet, if any Roman military weapon were diſcovered in the ruins

* Idler, No. 94.

ruins of Herculaneum, it would deſervedly be the object of curioſity, and a collector of antiquities might deſcribe it without being cenſured, in Dr Johnſon's polite ſtyle, as a *thief of time*. Of this paſſage, however, the leading idea is juſt; and, had the Doctor been able to expreſs himſelf with preciſion, it would have ſerved, in an admirable manner, to delineate the character of the author of thoſe paſſages which we have juſt now been reading from his Dictionary.

A Puppy is ſaid to be, 'the progeny of a bitch,' but ſo is the bitch herſelf. Repleviable is, 'what 'may be *replevined*.' Repair is, 'reparation;' and reparation is, 'the act of repairing.' A Republican is, 'one who thinks a commonwealth, without mo-'narchy, the beſt government.' But this is only half a definition: for every ſubject of a republic, is a republican, whether he think it the beſt government or not. Republican, a. (from republic) is, 'placing 'the government in the people.' Is Venice under the government of the people? It is curious enough to hear ſuch an author as Ben Johnſon cited to prove what a republic is. The reader will compute what title the Doctor has to the character given him by a late writer, viz. that 'his great learning and genius ren-'der him one of the moſt *ſhining* ornaments of the 'preſent age.' A Looking-glaſs is, 'a glaſs which 'ſhews forms reflected;' but ſo will a common glaſs bottle; though we never term it a looking-glaſs. He ſays it is compounded of *look* and *glaſs*; but, if the reader happens to think it is derived from *looking* and *glaſs*, the Doctor cannot confute him. A knave is, 'a petty raſcal, a ſcoundrel.' A *Loon* is, 'a ſorry 'fellow, a ſcoundrel.' A *Looby* is, 'a lubber, a clum-'ſy clown.' A *Lubber* is, 'a ſturdy drone, an idle, 'fat, bulky *loſel*, a booby.' A *Loſel* is, 'a ſcoundrel, 'a ſorry worthleſs fellow.' A *Lubbard* is, 'a lazy 'ſturdy fellow.' A *Booby* is—but you muſt know what it is, while you read, in theſe elegant definitions, the taſte and genius of Dr Johnſon. He ſays, that

that Bone is, ‘ the ſolid parts of the body of an ani-
‘ mal.’ Are not the fat and the muſcles alſo ſolid? A Volume is, ‘ ſomething rolled or convolved ;’ and ſo is a barrel, a foot-ball, and a blanket. But a volume is likewiſe ‘ *as much as ſeems convolved at once ;*’ an expreſſion hardly intelligible; and it is a book. A Book, we are told, is, ‘ a volume, in which we read
‘ or write ; and whether we read and write in it or not.

‘ V has two powers expreſſed in Engliſh by two
‘ characters, v, conſonant, and u, vowel.’ One would think theſe were two different letters, as much as any others in the alphabet, The ſame remark applies to letters I and J, which the Doctor has blended. It is remarkable that this *Engliſh* Dictionary begins with a *Latin* word ; and the Doctor has inſerted it without giving an authority.

A Ketch is, ‘ a *heavy* ſhip ; and a Junk is, ‘ a *ſmall*
‘ ſhip of China.’ A Sloop is, ‘ a ſmall ſhip ;’ and a Brigantine is, ‘ a light veſſel ;’ but, it would have required little learning or ingenuity to have ſaid, that, in our marine, a ſloop has only one maſt, except ſloops of war, which have three ; and, that a brigantine is a merchant ſhip with two. A brig, a lugger, a hooker, a ſchooner, a galliot, a galleon, a proa, a punt, a xebeque, and a ſnow, are not inſerted in this *compleat* Engliſh Dictionary ; but a Cutter is, ‘ a nimble boat
‘ that *cuts* the water.’ Did we ever hear of a boat that did not cut the water? This explanation, like that of at leaſt twenty thouſand others, is defective ; becauſe, beſides a man of war's boat, the word Cutter is applied to a ſmall veſſel with one maſt, rigged as a ſloop, that ſails very near the *wind* ; from which peculiarity, its appellation is derived.

A Cannon is, ‘ a gun larger than can be managed by
‘ the hand.’ Cannon-ball and Cannon ſhot are, ‘ the
‘ balls which are ſhot from great guns.’ Mr Locke is cited to ſhew, that *cannot* is compounded of *can* and *not*. Menſtruous is, ‘ having the catamenia ;’

and

and this laſt word is wanting, a frequent mode of *definition* in this book. The Eye is, 'the organ of 'viſion.' Eye-drop, *(eye* and *drop)* 'tear.' See alſo Eye-ball, Eye-brow, Eye-glance, Eye-glaſs, Eyeleſs, Eye-lid, Eye-ſight, Eye-ſore, Eye tooth, Eye-wink, Eye-witneſs. Eye-ſtring is, 'the ſtring of the eye *.' The following names are cited to ſupport the explanations: Dryden, Spencer, Newton, Milton, Garth, Bacon, Samuel, Peter, and Shakeſpeare four times. The man who can make ſuch a pedantic parade of erudition, muſt be a mere quack in the buſineſs of book-building; and the reader who thinks himſelf edified by hearing, that an eye-wink is, 'a wink as a 'hint or token,' muſt be an object of pity. But there is no ſuch reader. *Quere.* Do we never wink but as a hint or token? Achor is, 'a ſpecies of the *Herpes*;' and Hey, 'an expreſſion of joy.' A Mocker is, 'one 'who mocks;' and a Laughing-ſtock, *(laugh* and *ſtock)* a 'butt, an object of ridicule.' Iron, a. is, 'made of iron;' and Iron, ſ. is ſaid to be, 'a metal 'common to all parts of the world;' which is not the fact.

Numſkull, *ſ. (numb* and *ſkull)* 'a *Dullard*; a dunce; 'a dolt; a blockhead.' Numſkulled, *a.* (from *Numſkull*) 'dull; ſtupid; doltiſh.' Nun, *ſ.* 'a woman 'dedicated to the ſeverer duties of religion, ſecluded 'in a cloiſter from the world.' The Nuns of London were *not* employed in the ſeverer duties of religion, which has nothing to do with ſeverity. The inſtitution of nunneries is the moſt atrocious inſult upon human feelings, that ever diſgraced the ſelfiſh and brutal policy of the Roman prieſthood, and its conſequences are the moſt ſhocking and criminal. The man who would palliate ſuch an outrage on Chriſtianity, deſerves no quarter †. From this ſample of his good ſenſe

* What ſtring does the Doctor mean? for, beſides the optic nerve, there are ſix muſcles, four ſtraight, and two oblique, and other ſmall nervous branches.

† It is ſurpriſing how ſome perſons acquire the reputation of pity.

ſenſe and piety, one would hardly rank the Rambler above 'a domeſtic animal, that catches mice.'

Jack is, '1. The diminutive of John. 2. The name 'of *inſtruments*, which ſupply the place of a boy, *as* 'an *inſtrument* to pull off boots.' Bronchocele, *ſ.* a 'tumor of that part of the *aſpera tertia*, called the '*Bronchos*,' and this laſt word is wanting. Broom is 'a ſhrub;' and Brogue 'a kind of ſhoe.' See alſo Broomſtaff, Broomy, Broth, Brothel, and Brothel-houſe. Bubo, 'the groin from the bending of the 'thigh to the *ſcrotum*;' but the *ſcrotum* is not explained.

Snot. 'The mucus of the noſe.' Noſe. 'The pro-'minence on the face, which is the organ of *ſcent*, 'and the emunctory of the brain.'

He ſhould have ſaid the organ of *ſmell*, for we do not ſay the ſenſe of *ſcenting*. But from what he ſays of them, it appears that he is ignorant of the diſtinction between theſe two words. If the noſe were the emunctory of the brain (which every ſurgeon's apprentice knows that it is *not*), in that caſe ſnot could not be the mucus of the noſe, but the mucus of the brain. It belongs to neither. It is entirely, or principally formed in the glands of the throat, as we ſee every day in coughing. To contradict ſuch inconſiſtencies,

piety. The fervour of Dr Johnſon's devotion cannot be denied by thoſe who have ſeen him riſe in the midſt of a large company—fall down on his knees behind his chair, repeat his Pater noſter, and then reſume his ſeat. This is one way to get a character for holineſs, and it is an abſolute fact.

Laud proved his title to the dignity of a ſaint, by doing all the miſchief that lay in his power. He lighted up the flames of diſcord through three kingdoms. They were extinguiſhed in the courſe of twenty years, by rivers of blood.

'Knocking Jack of the North' founded his reputation, by railing at the damnable ſin of fornication, deſtroying great numbers of fine buildings, and inſulting the perſon of his Sovereign. His character was completely deteſtable, which is evident from the whole tenor of his life and writings, from his 'Blaſt againſt Women,' and above all, from his inſolence to Queen Mary, a Princeſs the moſt admired, the moſt beautiful, the moſt injured, and the moſt unfortunate of her age.

encies, would be below the dignity of any writer, if they were found in a book leſs famous than the Engliſh Dictionary.

Ruſt. 'The red *Deſquamation* of old iron.' Deſquamation. 'The act of ſcaling foul bones.' Sinew. '1. A tendon; the ligaments by which the joints are 'moved. 2. *Muſcle* or *nerve!*' Other metals ruſt as well as iron, and ruſt is not always red; that of copper for inſtance is blue or green. It is not quite clear why the word *Deſquamation* is introduced. But his account of a *ſinew* exceeds every thing of the kind.

Highflier. 'One that carries his opinion to extra-'vagance.' The word relates to a particular ſet of men in this country, and to them only. A Derviſe, a Friar, and a Bramin, profeſs extravagant opinions; but an Engliſh writer would not call them *Highfliers*, nor would he be underſtood if he did.

Chervill. 'An *umbelliferous* plant.' Periwig. '*Ad-'ſcititious* hair.' Chemiſt, and Chemiſtry are omitted, but Chymiſtry is, 'philoſophy by FIRE;' and Chymiſt, 'a philoſopher by FIRE!' With what inexpreſſible contempt would the youngeſt of Dr Black's audience hear theſe definitions? The folly of the man, who can ſcribble ſuch jargon is eclipſed by the ſuperlative ignorance of thoſe who vindicate and admire him. Dr Johnſon aſſerts, that Shakeſpeare 'has 'corrupted language by every mode of depravation *.' The remark applies to himſelf And his advocates muſt allow, that 'they endure in *him* what they ſhould 'in another loath and deſpiſe †.' Indeed I can very well believe the Doctor, when he ſays, that his book was compoſed while he was in a ſtate of DISTRACTION ‡. For the honour of his veracity, we may hope, that he was likewiſe *diſtracted* when he obſerved of the ſocial, facetious, and celebrated John Wilkes, Eſq; that 'Lampoon would diſdain to ſpeak ill of 'him, of whom no man ſpeaks well §.'

Part

* Preface to Shakeſpeare. † Ibid. Dr Johnſon on Shakeſpeare.
‡ Preface to Folio Dictionary. § Falſe Alarm.

Part of his book has merit; but take it altogether, and perhaps it is the ſtrangeſt farrago which pedantry ever produced. It will be ſaid that theſe are partial ſpecimens, but we have traced him through various *ramifications* of learning, and found his ignorance extreme. A ſenſible reader will try his own abilities, in judging of the Doctor's *great* performance. Nor will he throw down this pamphlet without a candid peruſal, becauſe, by ſome unaccountable infatuation, the dictionary has for twenty ſeven years been admired by thouſands and ten thouſands, who have never *ſeen* it. Let us exert that courage of thought, and that contempt of quackery, which to feel, and to diſplay, is the privilege and the pride of a Briton. In a country where no man fears his king, can any man fear the ſound of a celebrated name, or crouch behind the the banner of Dullneſs, becauſe it is born by SAMUEL JOHNSON, A. M. & LL. D.?

I ſhall now take leave of this enormous compilation, and return, for a few pages, to the reſt of his works.

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SPEAKING of Pope's edition of Shakeſpeare, Dr Johnſon obſerves, 'That on this undertaking, to 'which Pope was induced by a reward of two hun-'dred and ſeventeen pounds, twelve ſhillings, he 'ſeems never to have reflected afterwards *without vex-'ation* *.' The Doctor ought never to reflect 'with-'out vexation' on his own edition of Shakeſpeare. He publiſhed his propoſals in 1756, but the work itſelf did not appear till 1768, and then, though the world was warmly prejudiced in his favour, and tho' he had plundered every thing which he thought valuable, from all his predeceſſors, yet his performance was received with general diſregard. His preface was the particular butt of cenſure; his deficiencies were detected 'with all the inſolence of victory;' and the public

* Life of Pope.

public were, for once, inclined to ſay of him, what he ſays of Mr Theobald, viz. that he was 'a man of 'heavy diligence, with very ſlender powers *.'

Indeed the Doctor perſecutes the name of Theobald with the moſt rancorous ſpirit of revenge. In his propoſals for printing Shakeſpeare, he tells us, 'that Mr Theobald, if fame be juſt to his memory, 'conſidered his learning only as an inſtrument of 'gain, and made no farther enquiry after his au-'thour's meaning, when once he had notes ſufficient 'to embelliſh his page with the expected decorations.' If Theobald was poor, he was certainly prudent in conſidering his learning as an inſtrument of gain. In this point, he has been exactly copied by no leſs a perſonage than Dr Johnſon himſelf. But the Doctor has not ventured to ſay that Theobald was a venal proſtituted dabbler in politics; that he inſulted his King, till he received a penſion; and that when he had received his penſion, he inſulted his country. No. 'The old books, the cold pedantry, and ſluggiſh 'pertinacity of Theobald,' never excited the ſerious contempt or indignation of mankind. Dr Johnſon aſſerts, 'That when Theobald publiſhed Shakeſpeare 'in oppoſition to Pope, the *beſt* notes were ſupplied 'by Warburton †.' This is an aſſertion without a proof, and merits no regard; for his veracity keeps pace with his candour.

The admirers of Pope will be ſenſible of the good nature and honeſty of Dr Johnſon, from the following unqualified aſſertion: 'The great object of his '(Pope's) ridicule is *poverty*; the crimes with which 'he reproaches his antagoniſts are their debts, their 'habitation in the mint, and their want of a dinner. 'He ſeems to be of an opinion, not very uncommon 'in the world, that to want money is to want every 'thing ‡.' The crimes with which Pope reproaches the Duncenian heroes are ſlander and *forgery* §, moſt



* Life of Pope. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

§ Let Budgell charge low Grubſtreet on my quill—
And write whate'er he pleaſe, *except my* WILL!
Epiſtle to Arbuthnot.

of them were not only bad writers, but bad men; and it is only in the latter point of view, that the poet conſidered them as fair objects of ridicule. Had Pope been capable of inſulting honeſt indigence, his reputation and his glory muſt have been for ever blaſted. The humanity of Engliſhmen would have rejected, with horror, ſuch impious wit. The laſt part of this malicious paragraph is, after a few pages, contradicted by Dr Johnſon himſelf. Had Pope been of opinion, that *to want money is to want every thing*, he would not have aſſiſted Dodſley 'with a hundred 'pounds that he might open a ſhop—of the ſubſcription of forty pounds a-year that he raiſed for Savage, TWENTY were paid by himſelf. He was accuſed of loving money, but his love was eagerneſs 'to gain, not ſolicitude to keep it. In the duties of 'friendſhip, he was zealous and conſtant. It does not 'appear that he loſt a *ſingle* friend by coldneſs, or by 'injury; thoſe who loved him once, continued their 'kindneſs *.' This cannot be the picture of a man who inſulted innocent miſery.

The Doctor is perpetually giving us ſtrokes of his own character. Thus, of Mr Thomſon we are informed, 'that he was "more fat than bard beſeems," 'of a *dull* countenance, and a *groſs*, *unanimated*, *un*-'*inviting* appearance.' This is the Rambler's portrait, but when applied to the author of the Seaſons, it is not true, for Mr Murdoch aſſures us, 'that his 'worſt appearance was, when you ſaw him walking 'alone, in a thoughtful mood; but let a friend ac-'coſt him, and enter into converſation, he would 'inſtantly brighten into a moſt amiable aſpect, his fea-'tures no longer the ſame, and his eye darting a pe-'culiar animated fire. His looks always announced, 'and half expreſſed what he was about to ſay †.'

The Doctor fills up ſeveral pages with blotted variations from Pope's manuſcript tranſlation of the Iliad. He exults in this precious production, and foreſees

* Life of Pope. † Vide life prefixed to his works.

ſees that the wiſeſt of his readers will wiſh for more. Having peruſed a few lines of it only, I cannot pretend to rate the value of this commodity: But a plain reader will be apt to ſuſpect that the Doctor has on this, as on former occaſions, adopted the prudent proverb, *multum ſcribere, multum ſolvere.* If Lexiphanes *overflows with Greek*, he may, by comparing Pope with Homer, afford much entertainment.

'Wives and huſbands are, indeed, inceſſantly com-'plaining of each other *.'—Not unleſs both are fools, nor always then. For the credit of its author, I ſuppreſs the ſequel of this unhappy period.

Dr Johnſon obſerves, that Mr Addiſon, 'by a ſe-'rious diſplay of the beauties of Chevy Chace, ex-'poſed himſelf to the ridicule of Wagſtaff.—In Che-'vy Chace there is *not much* of either bombaſt or af-'fectation, but there is chill and lifeleſs imbecility. 'The ſtory cannot poſſibly be told in a manner that 'ſhall make *leſs* impreſſion on the mind †.' This is a moſt ſcandalous criticiſm; no man who ever heard the ballad, will hear it with patience. The Doctor's pious intention ſeems to have been to leſſen the reputation of Addiſon. Let him who falſifiies without ſhame, be chaſtiſed without mercy ‡.

Though

* Rambler, No. 45. † Life of Addiſon.

‡ Dr Johnſon's reputation is raiſed to ſuch a height, that many writers do not think their productions can be ſucceſsful, unleſs they have his liberty to acknowledge their obligations to him. This tribute of gratitude generally occupies a ſplendid dedication, or the ſecond paragraph in the author's preface, and we are ſometimes reminded in a marginal note of his particular reſpect for the Doctor. By a man of tolerable information, ſuch eulogiums cannot be peruſed without intenſe diſguſt. But one of theſe gentlemen has boaſted of the Doctor's approbation of a work, which, had he ever been conſulted, he would have *damned beyond all depth.* Dr Percy has publiſhed three volumes of Engliſh ballads, and as an apology for this work, he ſays in his preface, that he could refuſe nothing to ſuch judges as the late Mr Shenſtone, and—the author of the RAMBLER. Now take notice, that the very firſt poem in the collection, and one of the very beſt in the whole of it, is Chevy Chace! Dr Percy admires it. Dr Johnſon ridicules it in the roughеſt terms. What are we to think of this; and what muſt Dr Percy feel when he reads

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Though Dr Johnſon long acted as Reviewer of books for the Gentleman's Magazine, and though he often exerciſed his pen in that capacity with the moſt grovelling inſolence, yet he cannot ſpeak with patience of his rivals in that branch of trade. 'We have now,' ſays he, 'among other diſturbers of human quiet, a 'numerous body of Reviewers and Remarkers *.' He is angry with Lord Lyttleton, for having once condeſcended to correſpond with the Critical Reviewers. He obſerves, that the CRITICAL REVIEWERS, 'can ſa-'tisfy their hunger only by devouring their brethren. 'I am far from imagining that they are naturally 'more ravenous or blood-thirſty, than thoſe on whom 'they fall with ſo much violence and fury; but they 'are *hungry*, and *hunger* muſt be ſatisfied; and theſe 'SAVAGES, when their bellies are full, will fawn on 'thoſe whom they now bite †.' They have lately ‡ celebrated the Doctor's great candour, of which this paſſage is the beſt evidence that 'will eaſily be found.'

I finiſh this eſſay by reciting the circumſtance which gave it birth.

In 1778, Mr William Shaw publiſhed an Analyſis of the Gaelic language. He quoted ſpecimens of Gaelic poetry, and harangued on its beauties, with the aukward elocution of one who did not underſtand them. A few months ago, he printed a pamphlet. He traduced decent characters. He denied the exiſtence of Gaelic poetry, and his name was echoed in the newſpapers as a miracle of candour. Is there in the annals of Grubæan impudence any parallel to this? Is there any nation in the world except *one*, perpetually deluded by a ſucceſſion of impoſtors? Are theſe the bleſſed fruits of that freedom which patriots periſh to defend? If there be no pillory, no whipping poſt for ſuch accumulated guilt, we may truly ſay with

the paſſage juſt now quoted from his friend? If Dr Johnſon thinks Chevy Chace ſo inſufferably dull, how muſt he have ſickened in the peruſal of many pieces in that collection.

* Fugitive pieces, Vol. II. p. 136. † Ibid, p. 26.

‡ Review for Auguſt 1782.

with Shakeſpeare, that 'Liberty plucks Juſtice by the 'noſe.' This incomparable bookbuilder, who writes a dictionary before he can write grammar, had previouſly boaſted what a harveſt he would reap from Engliſh credulity. He was not deceived. The bait was caught; and the voice of truth was for ſome time drowned in the clamours of the rabble. Mr Shaw wants only money. He thinks only how to get it, and with a courage that is reſpectable, avowed his intentions. But better things might have been expected from the moral and majeſtic author of the Rambler. He muſt have ſeen the Analyſis of the Gaelic language, for Shaw mentions him as the patron of that work. He muſt have ſeen the ſpecimens of Celtic poetry there inſerted. That he is likewiſe the patron of this poor ſcribble, no man, I ſuppoſe, will offer to deny. From this ſingle circumſtance, Dr Johnſon ſtands convicted of *an illiberal intention to deceive.* Candour can hardly heſitate to ſum up his character in the vulgar but expreſſive pollyſyllable.

It will be demanded, why a private individual, without intereſt or connections, preſumes to interfere in the quarrels of the learned? But when the moſt ſhameleſs of mankind, is *hired* to abuſe the characters of his countrymen, to blaſt the reputations of the living and the dead; when *ſuch* a tool is employed for *ſuch* a purpoſe, that thoſe who are inſulted cannot with propriety ſtoop to a reply,—THEN the higheſt degree of goodneſs may degenerate into the loweſt degree of weakneſs, ſilence becomes approbation, and tenderneſs and delicacy deſerve different names. He is unfit to be the friend of virtue who cannot defend her dignity; who dares not execute her vengeance. In this ſhameful affair, one circumſtance does honour to Dr Johnſon. *His friendſhip is not exhauſted in a compliment.* He does not excite expectation merely to diſappoint it. He reſembles not ſome perfidious wretches, whom his intrepid eloquence hath ſo properly pointed out to public indignation.

Exerting

Exerting the generoſity which often ennobles the character of an Engliſhman, he engages not his dependant in a performance for which he ſcruples to pay.

To glean the tithe of this man's abſurdities cannot be of peculiar conſequence to me: But the world is long ſince weary of his arrogant pedantry, his officious malice, his deteſted aſſiduity to undermine his ſuperiors, and overbear his equals. Reformation is never quite hopeleſs, and by ſubmitting to make a catalogue of his errors, there is a chance to humble and reform him. Perhaps indeed, like 'The *drudges of* 'ſedition, HE will hear in ſullen ſilence, HE will feel 'conviction without ſhame, and be confounded, but 'not abaſhed *.' I have not arreſted a few careleſs expreſſions, which, in the glow of compoſition, will ſometimes eſcape, but by fair, and copious quotations from Dr Johnſon's ponderous abortions, have attempted to illuſtrate his covetous and ſhameleſs prolixity; his corruptions of our language; his very limited literature; his entire want of general learning; his antipathy to rival merit; his paralytick reaſoning; his ſolemn trifling pedantry; his narrow views of human life; his adherence to contradictions; his defiance of decency; and his contempt of truth. I have not been ſporting in the mere wantonneſs of aſſertion. I have produced ſuch various, ſuch invincible, ſuch damning proofs, that the Doctor himſelf muſt feel a burſt of conviction. To collect every particle of *inanity* which may be found in our *patriot's* works is infinitely beyond the limits of an eighteen-pence pamphlet. I ſtop at preſent here, but the ſubject ſeems *inexhauſtible* †!

* Vide Falſe Alarm.

† Though Dr Johnſon has on all occaſions expreſſed the utmoſt contempt and averſion for the Scots, yet they have in general been ſolicitous to ſoothe his pride. Dr Smollet ſays, that 'Johnſon, in-'ferior to none in philoſophy, philology, and poetry, ſtands fore-'moſt as an eſſayiſt, juſtly celebrated for the ſtrength, dignity, and 'variety of his ſtile, &c.' And Beattie affirms, that his dictionary,

conſidered

conſidered as the work of one man, is a *moſt wonderful* performance! The Doctor's capital enemies have likewiſe been Caledonians. The great author of Lexiphanes was a Scot, and the Rambler is yet ſmarting under the rough but irreſiſtible *remarks* of a Highland reviewer.

Our ingenious advocate for the ſecond ſight (vid. Tour) has long been duped by a ſucceſſion of raſcals. Lawder perſuaded him to believe, that Paradiſe Loſt was compiled from ſcraps of modern Latin poetry; his pamphlet bears ſtrong internal evidence that part of it at leaſt (as has been long alledged) is the production of the Doctor's pen. Compare in particular the preface with ſuch attempts in proſe as we know to be Lawder's own. Vide Gentleman's Magazine.

Mr Shaw has of late renewed his *enquiries*. They are only to be regarded as the deſperate ravings of a man who believes that, in conſequence of the *new light*, his moral and his literary character have ſunk together into final perdition; that his name, like Lawder's, will be remembered only to his infamy, and *that* Dr Johnſon himſelf deſpiſes and abhors him. Do you think me too ſevere on the Doctor's infirmities? Can you forgive his injuſtice to the memory of his benefactors—his political duplicity—his thirſt for blood—his inveterate antipathy to the moſt ſacred rights of mankind?

Dr Johnſon ſays, that one of the loweſt of all human beings is a Commiſſioner of Exciſe. This can hardly be the caſe, unleſs himſelf or his reverend friend Mr Shaw ſhall arrive at that dignity. But in the mean time, there is a Commiſſioner of Exciſe, or Cuſtoms, (no matter which) who in the ſcale of human beings is not much *lower* than Lexiphanes himſelf. This couple ſtand in the moſt ſtriking contraſt; and to draw the character of the firſt is to write an oblique but moſt ſevere cenſure on the character of the ſecond. Dr Smith's language is a luſcious and pure ſpecimen of ſtrength, elegance, preciſion, and ſimplicity. His *Enquiry into the nature and cauſes of the wealth of nations* deſerves to be ſtudied by every member of the community, as one of the moſt accurate, profound, and perſuaſive books that ever was written. In *that* performance he diſplays an intimate and extenſive knowledge of mankind, in every department of life, from the cabinet to the cottage; a ſupreme contempt of national prejudice, and a fearleſs attachment to liberty, to juſtice, and to truth. His work is admired as a maſs of excellence, a condenſation of reaſonings, the moſt various, important, original, and juſt.

*F I N I S.*